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**Department of Defence**  
Defence Science and  
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# **Pre-Deployment Handbook: Afghanistan (post 2014)**

*David Matthews and Raspal Khosa*

**Joint and Operations Analysis Division  
Defence Science and Technology Organisation**

DSTO-GD-0809

## **ABSTRACT**

This Handbook provides information that will assist in understanding the complex environment that is Afghanistan in 2014 and beyond. The research and analysis supports Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel operating in Afghanistan as part of the post 2014 NATO mission Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT.

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## Pre-Deployment Handbook: Afghanistan (post 2014)

### Executive Summary

While the Australian Defence Force's (ADF) mission in Uruzgan concluded on 16 Dec 2013, Australia's engagement in Afghanistan continues through a range of activities designed to build the institutional capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The ADF provides instructors, advisors, support staff and force protection elements to the Afghan National Army Officer Academy (ANAO) and the Special Operations Advisory Group (SOAG) in Kabul; ongoing support to the ANA's 205 Corps Divisional Headquarters in Kandahar through the Coalition Advisory Team (205 CAT); advisors to the Logistics Training and Advisory Team (LTAT) and a continuation of embedded staff within a range of roles in ISAF Headquarters.

Furthermore, at a meeting in Brussels in June 2013 NATO Defence Ministers, with counterparts from other ISAF troop contributing states, endorsed the concept for RESOLUTE SUPPORT – a non-combat train, advise and assist mission beginning in 2015. Around 10 states, including Australia, have expressed interest in contributing to Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT, with assistance targeted at the crucial areas of C2, logistics, ISR, Special Forces and developing a capable Afghan Air Force. The concept of operations for Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT is to have Coalition Advisory Teams (CATs) plugged-in at regional ANSF Corps level headquarters, with the ability for mobile teams to reach a Brigade in the provinces if necessary.

This Handbook combines recent ADF experience and lessons, with DSTO research and analysis for the purpose of preparing individuals and force elements for the new ADF mission following the end of the ISAF mandate. It contains updated analysis on Afghanistan's history, geography, culture, society, government and internal stability as well as providing information on the nature of Australia's whole-of-government assistance to the country.

**The Handbook has been developed at the request of the Commander 1st Division and forms part of the material provided to all Australians prior to their deployment or posting to the country.**

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# Pre-Deployment Handbook Afghanistan



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Updates, observations or feedback to maintain the utility, accuracy and relevance of this handbook are welcomed and can be emailed to [HQ1DIVAWB@DRN.MIL.AU](mailto:HQ1DIVAWB@DRN.MIL.AU)

**This guide is available electronically at:**

<http://legacy/TeamWeb2010/ARMY/1div/HQ%201%20Div%20Directory/awc/Pages/AWB-Welcome.aspx>

# Foreword

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide relevant contemporary information for the ADF's mission in Afghanistan.

While the ADF's military mission in Uruzgan has completed, Australia's engagement in Afghanistan continues through a contribution to national programs that support the Afghan National Army including training and military advisers. We have learnt much from our evolved military role in Afghanistan but success on operations favours those who adapt fastest. The culture of a learning organisation is fundamental to our success as an Adaptive Army. The ADF has extensive experience and knowledge harnessed through its experiences in Afghanistan and to remain adaptive we must not only apply the lessons learnt from the recent past, but comprehensively and rapidly pass observations and experiences to force elements and individuals in Australia preparing for deployment.

This Handbook is a compilation of theatre relevant, practical hard-learned lessons, and of rigorous academically sound studies by DSTO. It contains general information about the environment, culture, history, people and combatants – essential information that everyone needs regardless of their role in the operational area.

I ask that you view this handbook as a start to the preparations required for your deployment and commend the Reading List to you.

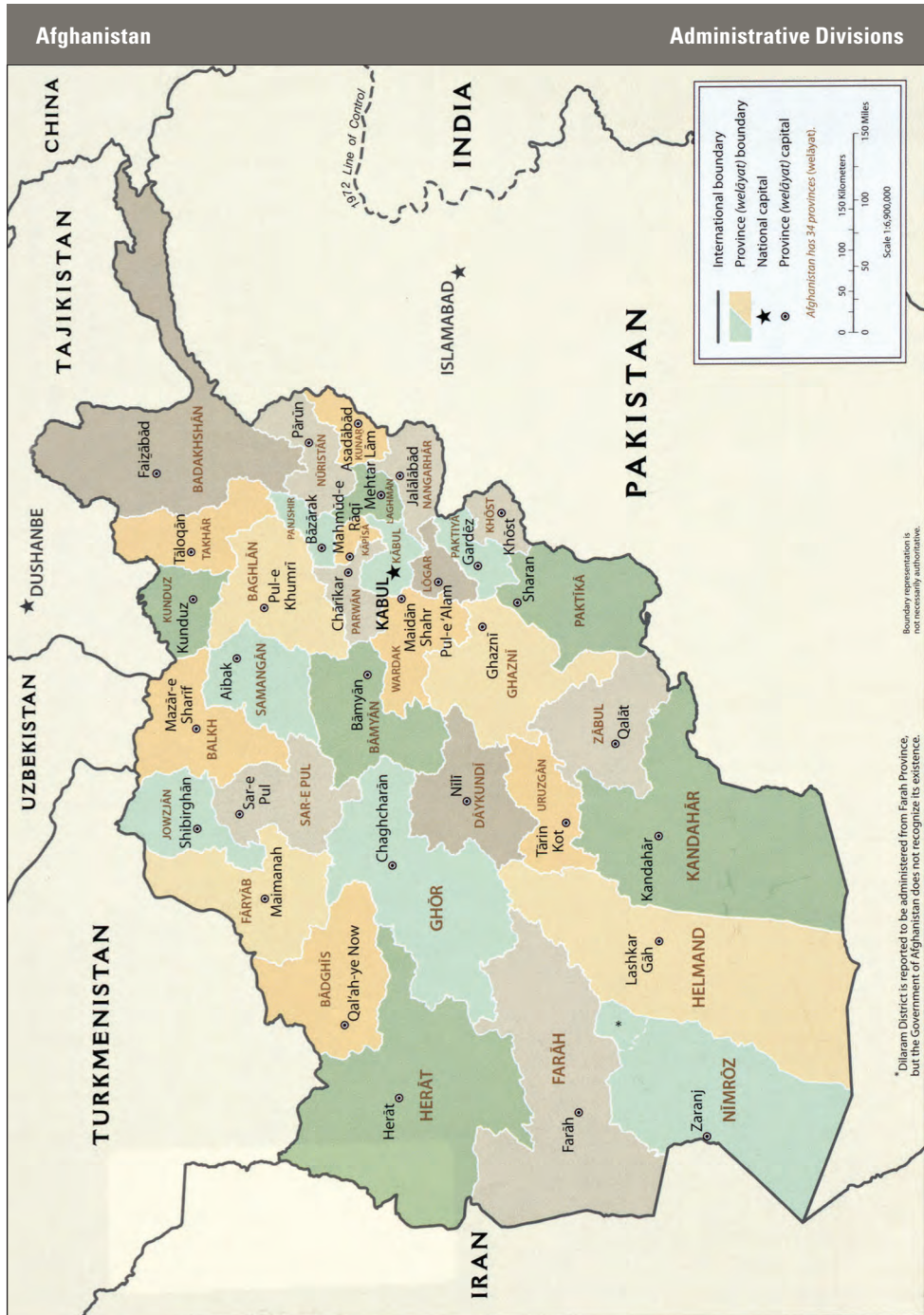


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Major General  
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# Part 1

## Afghanistan



## Chapter 1 – Geography

- Location
- Physical Terrain
- Climate
- Major Cities
- Waterways

### LOCATION

**101** Afghanistan occupies a landlocked position in central Asia wedged between Shi'a Iran and Sunni Pakistan. Its northern border abuts the former Soviet republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, a large section of which is formed by the Amu Darya River and its tributary, the Panj. In the northeast, Afghanistan shares a short border with China at the end of the Wakhan Corridor (a.k.a the Afghan panhandle). The nearest coast lies on the Arabian Sea, some 482 km to the south beyond Pakistan's Baluchistan Province.



*Topographic map of Afghanistan.*

### PHYSICAL TERRAIN

**102** The country can be divided into three distinct geographic regions: the Northern Plains, the Central Highlands of the Hindu Kush and the Southern Plateau.

### Northern Plains

**103** The rolling hills and plains north of the Hindu Kush form the southern boundary of the central Asian steppe. These fertile plains have long been home to Turkic peoples such as Uzbeks, Turkmen, Kazakhs and others. Much of Afghanistan's wealth is generated from this region. The plains are the bread basket of the country, producing most of Afghanistan's food. They are also rich in mineral and natural gas deposits. The main urban centres include Mazar-e-Sharif and Kunduz.

### Central Highlands

**104** The central highlands are dominated by the rugged and inhospitable Hindu Kush which constitutes the western edge of the Himalayan mountain system and runs diagonally across the country from northeast to southwest. In addition to the strategically important peaks and high mountain passes, the highlands consist of narrow gorges, wide valleys, deserts and meadows. Control of the passes (such as the Khyber Pass leading to Pakistan) and deep valleys (such as the Panjshir Valley northeast of the capital) has long been a prerequisite for military domination of the country. These mountains are home to the indomitable Pashtun tribes of military folklore, they also purportedly support the residue of Genghis Khan's marauding armies, the Hazara community, who converted to the Shi'a branch of Islam under Persian influence during the Safavid period. With an elevation of over 1,800m above sea level Kabul, sitting on the edge of the ranges, is one of the highest capital cities in the world. Other significant population centres in the highlands include the Hazara city of Bamiyan at an altitude of 2,800m, the multiethnic city of Ghazni at over 2,200m and the Pashtun centre of Jalalabad on the eastern edge of the range.





*The Hindu Kush.*

### Southern Plateau

**105** South of the Hindu Kush, the Southern Plateau consists of arid salt flats, stony expanses and sandy deserts. With the exception of the Helmand and Hari Rud River systems and their various irrigated 'green zone' tributaries, the soil of much of the region is infertile. The southern plateau and its principal city, Kandahar, is the traditional Pashtun heartland and formed the centre of the Durrani Empire in the 18th and 19th century. Toward the western edge of the plateau Persian influence increases and Pashtun preponderance gives way to Dari (Persian) speaking Aimaqs, Tajiks and Iranians. The main urban centre at the western edge of the plateau is Herat, a thoroughly Iranian city and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### CLIMATE

**106** Typical of central Asia, Afghanistan experiences extremes of climate. Winters are bitterly cold, with heavy snow across the ranges. Summers are generally hot and dry and subject to sand or dust storms known as the "*simoom*" (poison wind) or "*wind of 120 days*".

### Northern Plains

- Winter temperatures range from below freezing at night to less than 10°C during the day.
- Summer temperatures range from around 15 °C to 40 °C.

### Central Highlands

- At higher elevations winter lows may plummet to as low as -40 °C.

- Summer temperatures at lower elevations may rise as high as 40 °C.

### Southern Plateau

- Winter temperatures range from below freezing to a maximum of 15°C.
- In the summer the overnight low rarely falls below 20 °C, whilst the maximum can rise as high as 50 °C. Occasionally, monsoonal systems will blow across from the Indian subcontinent during summer, bringing tropical rainfalls.

## MAJOR CITIES

### Northern Plains

#### **107 Mazar-e-Sharif (pop. 300,000+).**

Mazar-e-Sharif (Tomb of the Chosen One) is named for its principal attraction, the shrine of Hazrat Ali, founder of the Shi'a branch of Islam. It is Afghanistan's fourth largest city and the main economic hub of the North. Although Mazar-e-Sharif has a predominance of Dari speaking Tajiks, the city is multicultural with most of Afghanistan's ethnolinguistic groups represented. It is strategically sited on the Afghan ring road at the junction of the main road and rail link to Uzbekistan.



*The Hazrat Ali Mosque, Mazar-e-Sharif.*

#### **108 Kunduz (pop. 250,000+).**

Kunduz is Afghanistan's fifth largest city after Mazar-e-Sharif and is linked to the latter by road. Although situated in the Uzbek and Tajik dominated north, Kunduz has a sizeable Pashtun population as a result of Abdur Rahman Khan's 19th century policy of establishing Pashtun settlements north of the ranges.

**109 Taloqan (pop. approx 200,000).** Sited in the far northeast of the country, the Tajik city of Taloqan was the last of Afghanistan's major cities to fall to the Taliban, holding out until January 2001. It remains a Tajik stronghold to this day.

### Central Highlands

**110 Kabul (pop. 3,000,000+).** Kabul is Afghanistan's largest city in addition to its administrative and legislative capital. Situated in a narrow valley of the Hindu Kush along the trade routes to south and central Asia, Kabul has long been fought over by Central Asian Empires, many of whom have made the city its capital. In more recent times, the city has suffered considerable hardship. During the Afghan Civil War (1992-1996) Kabul was depopulated and much of its city centre reduced to rubble. As a major cultural centre and seat of learning, the Taliban considered Kabul irredeemably secular and corrupt and instituted repressive measures against the city's largely progressive inhabitants. Since the US-led intervention Kabul has experienced something of a construction boom as reconstruction and aid money has flooded into the capital and its population has boomed. Whilst the dominant ethnic group are the Dari-speaking Tajiks, Kabul may be described as a multiethnic, multi-faith and multicultural city. Regardless of ethnic or religious background, residents of Kabul are known as *Kabulis* (even if Pashtun).



*Kabul as seen from Wazir Akbar Khan Hill.*

**111 Jalalabad (pop. 200,000+).** Afghanistan's sixth largest city is sited in a wide valley of the Hindu Kush on the Kabul-Peshawar highway. Due to its location on the Afghan side of the Khyber Pass, Jalalabad has seen a large influx of refugees returning after years of asylum in the sprawling Shamshatoo refugee camp near Peshawar, Pakistan. Whilst traditionally home to a thriving Sikh community, the population of the city is now overwhelmingly Pashtun.

**112 Ghazni (pop. 150,000+).** Situated at an altitude of over 2,200m at the south-eastern edge of the Hindu Kush where the mountains meet the southern plateau, Ghazni is an ancient city which retains a multicultural and multiethnic populace. The city is home to Tajiks, Pashtuns, Hazaras and even a small Hindu community.

**113 Bamiyan (pop. 60,000+).** Whilst not a populous city, Bamiyan is nevertheless important as the largest population centre of the Hazarajat. Situated on the ancient Silk Road, Bamiyan has seen traders, migrating peoples and invading armies since time immemorial. It was the capital of the Buddhist Kushan Empire and later the Kingdom of the White Huns. Long supported by Iran due to its Shi'ite residents, Bamiyan was one of the main centres of resistance to the Taliban during their rise to power. As a result, its residents suffered greatly under Taliban rule with reports of mass exterminations of the city's Shi'a during the late 1990s.

### Southern Plateau

**114 Kandahar (pop. 500,000+).** Afghanistan's former capital (until 1776) was founded by Alexander the Great in the 4th century BCE. Kandahar has been contested by Empires emerging from Persia in the west, India in the East and the Central Asian steppe in the north before emerging as the capital of the Durrani Empire in the 18th century. It is a city of numerous bazaars and mosques, chief of which is the *Khirka Sharif*, one of the holiest places in Afghanistan, and shrine of the founder of the Durrani dynasty, Ahmad Shah Abdali. The shrine is also said to house the cloak of Mohammed. Along with Peshawar in Pakistan,

Kandahar is the urban centre of the Pashtun people. In August 1994 the Taliban captured Kandahar and turned the city into their capital. Following the fall of the Taliban in 2001 the city became their last redoubt before they escaped across the border to neighbouring Quetta. Today Kandahar remains subject to significant Taliban infiltration despite the presence of ISAF troops based at Kandahar Air Field (KAF) just outside the city and significant numbers of ANSF in the city centre. The city has extensive road links with Herat to the west, Ghazni and Kabul to the northeast, Tarin Kowt to the north, and Quetta, in Pakistan, to the south.



Kandahar City.

**115 Herat (pop. approx 400,000).** Situated in a fertile valley carved by the Hari Rud River, Afghanistan's third largest city is the gateway to Iran and the centre of Persian culture in Central Asia. Known as the *Pearl of Khorasan*, the city is full of historic buildings, although many have suffered damage during the past 30 years of conflict. Because the main trade route into Afghanistan from the west passes through the city, the rulers of Herat have long exacted tolls on passing traders. During the Civil War, Herat fell into the hands of Ismael Khan who ran a largely peaceful fiefdom whilst the rest of the country descended into anarchy. Khan ran Herat like a traditional Persian Emir: sitting resplendent amidst Persian finery whilst receiving poor supplicant peasants and resolving local disputes. Today the city enjoys considerable aid from Iran, particularly for electricity, roads and the construction of a railway link. It remains an overwhelmingly Persian-speaking Tajik centre and continues to collect the highest amount of customs revenue for the central Afghan government.

**116 Lashkar Gah (pop. 200,000+).** Situated on the banks of the Helmand River, Lashkar Gah has the ambience of an attractive and genteel riverside town. The city was built as a headquarters for American engineers working on the Helmand Valley Authority irrigation project in the 1950s. It was designed to suit American preferences, with broad tree-lined boulevards and brick houses with no walls separating them from the street. However, in the wake of the Soviet occupation and Afghan civil war, the trees mostly came down and walls went up. Notwithstanding this, the massive irrigation project created the most extensive farming zone in southern Afghanistan, opening up many thousands of hectares of desert to cultivation. In recent times the irrigated valleys of the Helmand River have seen an explosion in poppy farming and, as a consequence, Helmand has become the centre of Afghanistan's narcotics industry. With the arrival of UK forces in 2006, Lashkar Gah started to attract significant amounts of migrants from neighbouring villages as the Brits, pursuing an *"expanding ink spot"* strategy, poured thousands of pounds of development funding into the city, distributed land to locals, stimulated the economy and generally beautified the town.

## WATERWAYS

**117** Over 80% of the country's fresh water originates from the central highlands. Although the ranges provide year round runoff from both winter rains and summer snowmelts, the rivers are characterised by marked seasonal variations. Flooding is common, particularly when the snow begins to melt in the spring. Despite the relative abundance of fresh water, residents suffer from chronic shortages as a result of inadequate storage, management and distribution infrastructure.

**118** The four main river systems in Afghanistan are the Amu Darya basin which serves the peoples of the northern provinces, the Hari Rud basin in the west, the Helmand River basin in the south and the Kabul basin in the east.

**119 Amu Darya River.** The Amu Darya (the River Oxus of antiquity) is one of the longest rivers in central Asia, flowing for over 2,500km. It rises from the north-eastern Pamir Mountains, runs east along the northern border of Afghanistan before flowing into the Turkmenistan steppe and dissipating into the desert prior to reaching its historic terminus in the Aral Sea. Most of the waterways north of the Hindu Kush drain into the Amu Darya basin which is subject to annual flooding – displacing residents and damaging agriculture.

**120 Hari Rud River.** The Hari Rud originates in the north-western Hindu Kush and flows due west until it reaches the Iranian border where it turns north, forming part of the Afghan-Iranian border, and then dissipates into the Turkmenistan desert.

**121 Helmand River.** The Helmand River rises from the central Hindu Kush some 80km west of Kabul and flows south-west into the Sistan basin in Iran. Many of the waterways in Regional Command South form part of this single drainage basin, including the Arghandab and Farah Rivers.

**122 Kabul River.** The Kabul River is the main river in the east. As with many of the waterways in the eastern provinces, the Kabul River forms part of Pakistan's Indus River catchment, passing through Kabul, Jalalabad and Peshawar before emptying into the Indus. The river exhibits significant seasonal variations, flowing at little more than a trickle during the autumn and winter months before swelling in spring as a result of melting snows.



*Afghan River Basins.*

## Chapter 2 – History

- Pre-Colonial History
- The Formation of the Afghan State
- Afghanistan During the Cold War
- The Soviet Episode
- Civil War
- The Rise and Fall of the Taliban
- A New Beginning

### PRE-COLONIAL HISTORY

**201** Afghanistan's history, political development, foreign relations, and existence as an independent state, have been largely determined by its location at the crossroads of Asia. Commonly, known as the '*Central Asian roundabout*', waves of migrating peoples and traders have poured through the region since ancient times, leaving a diverse range of ethnic and linguistic groups. Afghanistan has also been incorporated into great Empires with large standing armies, many of whom have established temporary local control, but few of whom have succeeded in occupying the country for any length of time. The territory of today's Afghanistan has over the centuries been occupied by Persians, Greeks, Mauryans, Kushans, Hephthalites (White Huns), Arabs, Mongols, Turks, Hotaks, Durrani, British and Russians.

**202** In 1738 a combined force of Nadir Shah's Persians and Ahmed Shah's Durrani-Pashtuns defeated the Ghilzai in Kandahar, thus establishing more than 300 years of conflict between the two great Pashtun tribal confederations. Following the death of the Persian King in 1747, a *loya jirga* (grand assembly) was held which appointed Ahmed Shah Durrani King of the Pashtuns and bestowed on him the title *Durr-e Dawran* (Pearl of the Age). Over the next two decades Ahmed Shah's army conquered

and united a territory encompassing the entire present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan, further extending the Empire east into the Indian Punjab and west into Persian Kohistan.

### THE FORMATION OF THE AFGHAN STATE

**203** The modern boundary of Afghanistan, however, only took shape in the late 19th century as Britain and Russia sought to transform the Durrani Empire into a buffer State between the two European colonies. Both the British Empire in India and the Russians in Central Asia confronted two threats: (i) the advance of each other and (ii) incursions from 'lawless tribes' on their fringes. These security concerns gave rise to a contest for influence that became known as the Great Game, the two Anglo-Afghan wars of the 19th century and, ultimately, the formation of the modern, independent, state of Afghanistan.

**204** Following the second Anglo-Afghan war (1878-1880), Afghanistan was effectively transformed into a British protectorate. In return for the payment of a large annual subsidy by the British, Abdur Rahman Khan acceded to the demand that he conduct all foreign affairs through the British administration in India. At the same time, Britain and Russia jointly demarcated the territory of the new state, sometimes without even consulting the Amir. Because Afghanistan fulfilled the needs of both Britain and Russia, it was sustained by both – regardless of its capacity to fulfil the core functions typically associated with state survival.

**205** The British, in particular, provided Abdur Rahman with weapons and cash, making it a borderline 'rentier-state' (see box 'Taxation & State-building' page 9). As a result of British aid Abdur Rahman was able to subdue more than forty revolts and begin erecting central institutions capable of administering his territory. The resulting state consisted of a Pashtun ruler using external resources to subdue, and redistribute amongst, an ethnically diverse society. This basic state structure endured until the fall of Najibullah in 1992 and the outbreak of the Afghan civil war.

**206** In 1919 Abdur Rahman's grandson, Amanullah, initiated the third Anglo-Afghan war and won the right to conduct his own foreign affairs. However, as a result, Amanullah forfeited the British subsidy bringing into sharp relief the failure of the Afghan government to penetrate society in order to derive revenue from the productive capacity of its people. Rather than transforming their client networks into nascent institutions, Abdur Rahman had devoted his efforts to co-opting and subduing local power brokers with the help of external military aid. Recognising this, Amanullah attempted to transform the Afghan state, introducing modernising reforms in taxation, land tenure, education (including women's education) and enabling infrastructure. However, with the withdrawal of the subsidy he found himself unable to fund the large standing army of his forebears and, as a consequence, defenceless when the tribes rose against him in 1928. Following a brief interlude when first a Tajik warlord (Habibullah Kalakani) and then a former Prince (Nadir Shah) ruled, Zahir Shah acceded to the throne where he reigned for 40 years over a remarkable period of stability.



*The Durand Line and disputed area within Pakistan.*

## THE DURAND LINE

Anglo-Russian cooperation in the late 19th century effectively delimited the territory of the modern state of Afghanistan. The 1893 Durand Line Agreement (named after Sir Henry Mortimer Durand who demarcated the line) established the eastern border of Afghanistan, cutting through the Pashtun tribal areas and resulting in the creation of two new Pashtun territories within British India (the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)). Although Britain claimed suzerainty over the Pashtun areas on the western side of the line they effectively remained an un-administered buffer between Afghanistan and the British Raj.

Following the formation of Pakistan as a successor state to the Raj, a *loya jirga* was held in Afghanistan which officially declared the Durand line as null and void, claiming that it had been imposed on the Pashtuns under duress. Afghanistan argued that, upon partition of British India, the tribal areas should have had the option of declaring independence as the nation of Pashtunistan (which presumably would have been subsequently integrated into Afghanistan). Accordingly, Afghanistan was the only member state to vote against Pakistan's admission to the UN in 1947. No subsequent Afghan government has recognised the line and the movement of people across the border has remained largely unchecked by governments on both sides for more than half a century.



## AFGHANISTAN DURING THE COLD WAR

**207** During the Cold War, the Soviet Union and United States, in many ways Imperial successors to Tsarist Russia and British India, competed for influence in Afghanistan thus re-establishing a Great Game of sorts. The USSR became the leading donor, providing Afghanistan with \$1.27 billion in economic aid and \$1.25 billion in military aid in the period from 1956 to 1978. In response, the US provided \$533 million in economic aid over the same period. Crucially, in each of the 20 years to 1978, foreign income constituted more than a third of state expenditures, rising as high as 60% in 1962. External revenues of this magnitude enabled the state to expand its bureaucratic apparatus centred in Kabul without bargaining with, or being held accountable to, its citizens or directly confronting rural elites. As a consequence, the stability of the 40 year Shah monarchy masked an underlying fragility in the state's political settlement.

**208** After 40 years of stability in which Afghanistan had established itself as a rentier of both Cold War protagonists, Prime Minister Daoud overthrew his cousin Zahir Shah in a coup, abolished the monarchy, nullified the 1964 constitution, and proclaimed himself President. The coup ushered in a period of crisis in which Nationalists, Islamists and Communists competed for ascendancy.

**209** The Soviet-sponsored People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) consisted of two distinct factions: Khalq (the masses) and Parcham (the flag). In what was to become an important distinction, Khalq recruited mainly from Pashtuns of rural background whereas Parcham attracted members from the Dari-speaking urban elite. Around the same time an Islamic movement, Jamiat-i-Islami (JI), began to gain influence. In 1973 the movement formed a leadership shura under the chairmanship of Burhanuddin Rabbani, deputy leadership of Abu Sayyaf and student leadership of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, all of whom went on to play major roles in the subsequent 30 years of warfare that was to grip the state. Daoud proceeded to repress JI, forcing Rabbani and Hekmatyar to flee to Pakistan where they linked up with the Pakistani

Islamic Society, the Saudi-based and funded Muslim World League (Rabitat al-Alam al-Islami) and Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood (Jamaat al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin).

## TAXATION AND STATE-BUILDING

Historically, bargaining between governments and taxpayers has played a central role in state formation. When governments depend on a large number of taxpayers for revenue they have incentives to promote broad prosperity, and to develop bureaucracies capable of collecting and administering taxes effectively. This not only helps build state capacity but engages citizens politically. In exchange for compliance with taxation, taxpayers demand some form of influence over the use of revenue and, as such, are drawn into public policy – making governments more responsive to their expectations.

However, the negative proposition is also true. Where the state is less dependent on citizens for revenue there are few incentives to promote broad economic development or to deliver on the expectations of the population. This is particularly the case in 'rentier' states suffering from the 'resource curse' where large revenues are obtained directly from extraction industries. However, whilst the resource curse is well-documented, the same lessons apply to states whose revenues rely heavily on foreign aid or the presence of international troops both of which make it difficult to develop a social contract with the broader society.

Of the fifty developing countries surveyed in the 1970s Afghanistan had the second lowest tax effort (the ratio of actual tax revenues to estimated taxable capacity).

**210** On 27 April 1978 the Communists ousted Daoud in a military coup, establishing the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA). However within a few months internecine fighting between the Khalq and Parcham factions led to widespread instability and a breakdown of governance over much of the country. The Islamists, in their Pakistani exile, declared jihad against the governing Communists and began to infiltrate their local districts to incite revolt. Faced with the possible failure of their buffer state, the USSR sent in a 'limited contingent' of troops to stabilise the country. The Soviets elaborated a new program of counterinsurgency against the Islamist 'mujahideen' and governance reform in support of the PDPA. However, by 1981 the 'limited' intervention had grown to over 100,000 troops and was to remain at similar levels for the rest of the 1980s. In response, the US steadily increased its military aid to the mujahideen (matched dollar for dollar by Saudi Arabia) from a low of \$50 million in 1981 to a high of \$630 million by 1987. Throughout the rest of the 1980s the two superpowers, engaged in what was to become the endgame of the Cold War, poured sophisticated weapons and massive quantities of cash into every social network they could recruit in Afghanistan. As a consequence, actors from both sides of the Cold War penetrated and subsequently devastated Afghan society.

*Afghanistan has now been the site of continuous violent conflict for the past 35 years and it is against this backdrop that the present war must be understood.*

## THE SOVIET EPISODE

**211** Like the British 100 years before, the goal of protecting their Empire by stabilising the rentier state on their borders drew the Soviets into Afghanistan. The Red Army installed Babrak Karmal, a Parchami, as general secretary of the PDPA and president of Afghanistan and began to moderate the revolutionary programs of the Khalqis which had pushed the country into open revolt. The Soviet state-building program was predicated on the

attempt to establish a centralised state apparatus in Kabul. Rather than penetrate the countryside with new social structures, the Soviets enacted the long-established Afghan state-building strategy of 'encapsulation', relying on patronage to various qawms, which retained their unique identities.

*"We've proved it again and again, that if once you have paid him the Dane-geld you never get rid of the Dane."*

- Rudyard Kipling

## ENCAPSULATION VS PENETRATION

Successful state-building typically involves a process of administrative and political penetration of society at all levels in order to regulate behaviour, extract resources (i.e. taxation), establish a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence and strengthen state-society relations. Penetration is, therefore, the process of establishing the control, presence, authority and visibility of the State within rural or otherwise isolated communities at the periphery of formal political processes.

However, the history, geography and ethnic diversity of Afghanistan has consistently served to hamper the process of State penetration, with successive governments confined largely to the main urban centres. The failure to extend the apparatus of the State to local levels and displace older, traditional, forms of administration can threaten the survival of the State. As a consequence, Afghan leaders have typically pursued a process of encapsulation of local sources of authority and legitimacy. In the past, this involved the co-option of the tribes through patronage to the malaks and khans.



**212** In addition to governance and security sector reform, the Soviets instituted a wide-ranging economic program aimed at increasing the efficiency and profitability of state enterprises. Notwithstanding this, profitability declined and so too the tax base. Agriculture remained the major productive activity yet, due to the lack of state penetration of the countryside, contributed virtually nothing to the fiscal base. In fact, during the occupation, state finances became even more dependent on external support and taxes provided less than a quarter of total government expenditure. Rentier income (now almost exclusively from communist-bloc states), increased from 40% of government expenditure prior to the PDPA coup to above 60% after the Soviet invasion.

**213** An overriding concern of both the Soviets and the PDPA was the attempt to establish the Islamic bonafides of the government. Government decrees increasingly invoked Allah. Aid was directed to the construction of mosques, religious education and even a subsidy for the annual hajj. However, these efforts met with little success. Far from stabilising the situation, the reliance of the PDPA on an avowedly atheist regime helped turn local uprisings against the new domestic order into a nationwide jihad attracting significant amounts of foreign support.

**214** Whilst the Soviets financed their PDPA clients, the US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia used aid to the mujahideen to block them. However, the issue of what kind of government should replace the PDPA would have splintered the anti-Soviet alliance so the alliance did not develop a political strategy, preferring to focus on the tactical objective of imposing costs on the Russians. The US, in particular, was indifferent about which groups might have more popular support or be more likely to form a stable government should the jihad succeed. Pakistan took advantage of the latitude afforded them by the US and systematically weakened moderate, nationalists groups whilst favouring the most radical Islamist ones. Pakistani authorities chose to officially recognise only six mujahideen

groups out of the dozens competing for aid (known as the 'Peshawar Seven' after a seventh was added at the insistence of Saudi Arabia), all of which were religious, as opposed to Pashtun-nationalist, in orientation. Of these, the most radical Islamist parties (in particular, the ISI-preferred Hezb-i-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) founded by Hekmatyar in 1976 after falling out with the JI leadership) benefited disproportionately, receiving the largest quantities of aid and weapons. Significantly, the Pakistani Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) deliberately marginalised traditionalist Pashtun groups, especially the Durrani, who had long claimed sovereignty over Pashtun homelands on the Pakistani side of the Durand Line (none of the seven official mujahideen parties were led by Durrani Pashtuns). In addition, the ISI provided training in both conventional and irregular warfare to over 80,000 mujahideen during the course of the Soviet occupation.

### QAWM

The past 30 years of warfare, however, has undermined the authority of traditional tribal leaders in many districts, replacing the once dominant form of social organisation with a patchwork of groups all competing for the allegiance of the local population. Increasingly, the term qawm (a Pashtu word referring to any form of social solidarity) is used, rather than tribe to describe a persons group affiliation. Affiliation may be based on immediate kinship bonds, wider tribal identity, village, occupation or shared history. A strong social bond in today's Afghanistan is that of shared membership of a particular mujahideen party during the Soviet occupation.

**215** The relationship between mujahideen commanders and traditional social structures varied greatly according to both local conditions

and the availability of external resources to the commander. At one extreme, HIG operated in virtual autonomy refusing to consult with local leaders unless they were also HIG party members. Due to HIG's preponderance in the Pashtun heartland of the south-east, the jihad saw the circumvention and gradual erosion of traditional Pashtun tribal power. On the other hand, Massoud, ensconced in the Panjsher Valley north of Kabul, institutionalised councils of both elders and ulema (religious scholars), creating a significant regional disparity in the degree of social penetration between the northern and the southern jihad. The mujahideen in the northern Tajik areas, in particular, developed extensive local organisations culminating in the Supervisory Council of the North, whereas the south and east remained fragmented amongst several smaller mujahideen groups most of which remained autonomous from traditional leaders.



*Ahmad Shah Massoud. Photo: Source unknown.*

**216** Despite massive Soviet offensives, a military stalemate quickly developed. The government controlled Kabul and other major towns whilst the mujahideen operated freely in much of the countryside. Whilst the insurgency did not pose an existential threat to the PDPA, the ability of the resistance to restrict government access to rural areas hindered the state-building effort. As a consequence, the government was left with no option but to pursue a process of patronage to whatever sources of authority and power they could find at a local level.

### THE EROSION OF TRADITIONAL SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Following the communist take-over, the governing Khalqi faction of the PDPA ceased to use the khans as intermediaries, choosing to treat them as feudal class enemies. Many were killed or arrested and those which escaped the purge lost a significant amount of their traditional power. As the Soviet occupation got underway, flows of aid to radical Islamist groups from the anti-Soviet alliance further eroded these traditions. By 1992, fifteen years of penetration by both sides of the Cold War alliance system had replaced the ancient regime of khans and ulema with a patchwork of radical mujahideen, warlords, drug lords, ethnic nationalists and trans-national criminal groups.

**217** Despite the success of the insurgency, (especially after the US began supplying the mujahideen with FIM-92 'Stinger' surface-to-air missiles), the Soviet's decided to withdraw largely for domestic political reasons as opposed to military defeat. This follows a standard pattern of insurgent victories, where guerrillas avoid decisive confrontation in order to draw out the conflict and sap the political will of counterinsurgents (see box on page 13). The withdrawal began on 15 May 1988 culminating some nine months later on 15 February 1989. During the decade-long Soviet occupation a million of Afghanistan's 15 million pre-war inhabitants were killed. 5 million had sought asylum in neighbouring countries and a further 2 million were internally displaced within the country's borders. Once the Soviets left, a situation of rough equivalence prevailed – both Cold War protagonists aided and armed their clients (positive symmetry) until the end of 1991 when the US and now defunct USSR agreed to cease all military aid to the country (negative symmetry).

**218** With the withdrawal of the Soviet military from the countryside, agriculture began to revive. Much of this took the form of opium growing, heroin refining and smuggling, organised by mujahideen and Pakistani drug syndicates. Commanders in the south, flush with opium revenues, increasingly behaved like traditional khans or, more descriptively, warlords. Under a system known as Salaam, opium warlords began paying cash for the crop at the time of sowing and collecting the harvested product directly from the 'farm gate'. As such, opium began to substitute for credit as well as income and reduced significantly a range of risks incurred by the farmer – risks from crop failure, from the threat of eradication and risks incurred whilst transporting the product along insecure public roads. While farmer's profit margins on illicit crops were broadly similar to conventional crops, the latter were often stolen by criminals or 'taxed' by mujahideen, warlords, or corrupt policemen on the way to market.

### THE ROLE OF PROTRACTION IN INSURGENT STRATEGY

On 25 April 1975, 5 days before the fall of Saigon, US Colonel Harry Summers was in Hanoi leading a US delegation to the North Vietnamese capital. During the visit he remarked to his North Vietnamese counterpart, Colonel Nguyen Don Tu, *'you know, you never beat us on the battlefield'*. The North Vietnamese officer thought for a moment, then replied: *'That may be so, but it is also irrelevant'*.

**219** After the Soviets left, the PDPA sought not to dislodge or destroy mujahideen commanders and local warlords but, where possible, to co-opt and incorporate them. In short Najibullah (President from 1988-1992) pursued the strategy of encapsulation that had been the *modus operandi* of governments since the formation of the Afghan state. And just like them, he was successful so long as the external resources continued to flow.

However with the loss of Soviet aid in 1991, a State that had been reliant on external resources since its inception in the 19th century suddenly faced the realisation that it had few additional sources of revenue and, as such, little capacity to continue its program of patronage and redistribution in the countryside. The subsequent collapse of the Afghan State and outbreak of civil war left Afghanistan an ungoverned land in which regional powers (in particular, Pakistan, India, Iran and Saudi Arabia) sponsored different warring factions in order to pursue a policy of strategic depth against each other. Once again, Afghanistan became the site of violent conflict in which external powers used proxies for their rivalry.

### THE CIVIL WAR

**220** The collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 led to the cessation of aid to the PDPA. Almost immediately, the Uzbek-dominated northern army led by General Dostum mutinied against Najibullah and allied with Massoud's Tajik-dominated mujahideen, seizing Mazar-e-Sharif and gaining control of most military installations between Mazar and Kabul. Rivalry between Massoud in the north and Hekmatyar in the east became associated with the Khalqi-Parchami split in the PDPA and began to take on the dimensions of an ethnic conflict between Pashtuns and non-Pashtuns.

**221** Once the state dissolved, the armed forces were absorbed into the ethnic conflict with Dari-speaking Parchami units coming under the command of Dostum or Massoud in the north, and Pashtu-speaking Khalqi Units crossing over to Hekmatyar. After a decade in which religion and resistance were the dominant themes of the war, ethnicity re-emerged as a powerful driver of conflict. The struggle for power came to be associated with four regional-ethnic forces:

- **Uzbeks** – centred around Mazar-e-Sharif, under Dostum.
- **Tajiks** – centred in the Panjshir Valley and the north-east, under Massoud.

- **Hazaras** – of the Hizb-e-Wahdat, under Mazari, centred in the central Hazarajat and supported by Iran.
- **Pashtuns** – of the south and east, largely under Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's and Maulawi Khalis's rival Hezb-i-Islami factions, as well as a variety of local leaders.



*Hazara Fighters (Hezb-e-Wahdat). Photo: Source unknown.*

**222** In what was to become the opening salvos of a four year civil war, the forces of Massoud, Dostum and Mazari (i.e. the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan (UIP) or, more commonly, Northern Alliance) expelled Hekmatyar's Pashtuns from the capital. The war was particularly vicious. Hekmatyar's forces, supported by Pakistan, unleashed violent bombardments of Kabul which had been virtually untouched during the Soviet occupation. Kabul's city centre was reduced to rubble and its population which numbered more than 2 million in 1992 was reduced to less than 500,000 by 1996. Nonetheless, Hekmatyar was ultimately too weak to seize the capital and a stalemate ensued. Rabbani, supported by the Northern Alliance proclaimed the establishment of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. However, whilst this entity may have been Islamic it was hardly a State. It had no income and little control over most of the country – most of the rank and file mujahideen remained in their villages where their power was only disputed by local rivals and, crucially, not by the central government.

**223** No one had any reason to secede from such an impotent state and, as a consequence,

regional-ethnic forces continued to operate in virtual autonomy and collect for themselves most of the revenue-generating capacity of the country. In the villages, competition amongst warlords, drug lords and criminal groups contributed to the anarchy and the unravelling of an ancient tribal society.








*Kabul during the Civil War (1992-1996). Photo: Source unknown.*

**224** Both the Soviet occupation and the subsequent Civil War shattered the social norms, national institutions and local leadership structures of traditional Afghan society. In the wake of the devastation, the madrassa (Islamic schools) networks were left as the only institutions capable of generating ties amongst significant elites whilst simultaneously penetrating the countryside. However, these had become radicalised by decades of interference from Pakistan which had pursued a policy of raising a generation of Islamist fighters to serve on the battlefields of Afghanistan and Kashmir. It was from these newly radicalised madrassas that the next chapter in the Afghan conflict was to emerge with the rise of a previously unknown group of students (talebs) and mullahs that were to call themselves the Taliban.

## THE RISE & FALL OF THE TALIBAN

**225** Seeking proxies for his conflicts in Afghanistan and Kashmir, Pakistan's General Zia (1977-1988) financed the construction of hundreds of madrassas in order to train a generation of young Pashtuns in the precepts of an increasingly radicalised form of Deobandism and prepare them

## CIVIL WAR LEADERS

CIVIL WAR LEADERS					Subsequent Activity (Omar and Karzai Governments)
Territory	Ethnic Constituency	External Support	Description		
 Rashid DOSTUM	Mazar-e-Sharif and North-West	Uzbek Turkey	<b>The Uzbek Wrestler</b> Ex-PDPA General who became a largely secular warlord and operated a virtual State in the north western provinces, including over 50,000 troops of Uzbek militia and ex-Parchami officers.	After Mazar fell to the Taliban, Dostum fled to Turkey. He led the Uzbek militia against the Taliban in 2001 and ran against Karzai for president in 2004 achieving 10% of the vote. Dostum was appointed chief of staff for the ANA in 2004 but suspended in 2008. He publicly supported Karzai in his 2009 election campaign.	
 Ahmad Shah MASSOUD	Panjshir Valley and North-East	Tajikistan India USA	<b>The Lion of Panjshir</b> Minister of Defence under the Rabbani government engaged in fighting with Hezb-Khalqi forces and allies for most of the Civil War. Controlled a militia of over 15,000 Tajik troops in addition to Afghan Army units. Attracted significant support in north eastern Tajik heartland and drew heavily on local resources. Hailed as national hero of the resistance.	Resisted the Taliban for five years as military commander of the Northern Alliance but was killed by al Qaeda suicide bombers two days prior to 9/11.	
 Gulbuddin HEKMATYAR	Eastern Provinces	Pakistan Saudi Arabia	<b>Radical Islamist</b> Radical Islamist and recipient of large sums of money and weapons from the Anti-Soviet alliance during the occupation. Although the US eventually ceased aid to Hekmatyar, he continued to receive support from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Failed to attract grass roots support from Pashtun communities, particularly in the southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar and as a consequence relied on Arab fighters, ex-Khalqis, and recruits from Pakistani refugee camps and madrassas	Escaped to Iran to avoid capture by Taliban but returned to lead a resurgent HIG following the US defeat of the Taliban in 2001. Currently the leader of the North-Eastern insurgency centred in and around the Shamshatoo refugee camp near Peshawar. Possible collaboration with one-time enemies, the Taliban, but no direct command relationship.	
 Ismail KHAN	Herat and Western Provinces	Iran	<b>The Emir of Herat</b> Ran a largely peaceful fiefdom centred around Herat.	Imprisoned by Taliban in 1995 but escaped to Turkey with the help of his jailers in 2000. Returned to Afghanistan in 2001 to support the Northern Alliance and US forces against the Taliban. Appointed Governor of Herat in first Karzai administration. Presently resides in Kabul as a minister of the Karzai government.	
 Abdul Ali MAZARI	Central Provinces (‘Hazara’at)	Iran	<b>Shi’a Federalist</b> Founder and leader of Shi’a militant group Hizb-i Wahdat. Supported Massoud after the fall of Najibullah before switching allegiance to Hekmatyar. Ran a largely autonomous state in the central provinces around Bamian during civil war.	Mazari resisted Taliban ethnic cleansing of Shi’a areas during their rise to power before being captured and executed in 1995 by the Taliban.	

Photos: Source unknown.

for jihad. The Taliban first emerged as an identifiable movement from within these madrassas and the various Afghan refugee camps within Pakistan. Their primary objectives were to restore peace and enforce shari'a law in an Afghanistan increasingly fractured by civil war.

## **SALAFISM, WAHHABISM & DEOBANDISM**

### **Salafism**

Salafism is an Islamic revivalist movement which advocates a return to the fundamental values and practices of the first three generations: the Sahaba (companions), the Tabi'un (followers) and the Tabi'al-Tabi'in (those after the followers). In the same way that Christian fundamentalist movements valorise the beliefs and practices of the early church, Salafists believe that Islam was perfect and complete during the days of Muhammad, but that undesirable innovations have been added over the centuries due to secular cultural influences. For example, the Sufi and Shia practice of venerating saints and constructing tombs over prophet's graves are seen as heretical 'polytheistic' innovations by Salafists.

In recent times Salafism has enjoyed a re-emergence especially within marginalised immigrant groups in Europe and Islamic fighters in Afghanistan, Kashmir, the Philippines and elsewhere looking for a unifying cause. Salafism has proved attractive to these groups because of its claim to authenticity and moral superiority and its offer of an emotional attachment to a pan-Islamic identity.

The popularity of Salafism among young men has resulted in a phenomenon

known as Salafi Burnout, whereby young militants or extremists gradually lose interest in the fanaticism of their youth becoming only minimally observant in middle age.

### **Wahhabism**

Although pre-dating the Salafi movement, Wahhabism could be considered a (narrow) form of Salafism practiced in Saudi Arabia and exported from there into the wider Islamic diaspora. The name derives from the founder of the movement, Muhammad Ibn abd-al-Wahhab (1703-1792). After his death Wahhab's teachings received State sponsorship under the house of Saud which helped transform his ideas first into a State religion and then a worldwide movement.

### **Deobandism**

Deobandism emerged as a reaction by orthodox Muslim scholars to British colonialism in the wake of the Indian Mutiny in the mid-19th century. Whilst there are many similarities, scholars disagree as to whether the Deobandi movement constitutes a form of Salafism (most of the stricter Salafi groups criticise Deobandism as containing heretical innovations). Following the partition of British India, the Deobandi movement established several madrassas in Pakistan, training a corps of ulema capable of issuing fatwas on all aspects of daily life and monitoring society's conformity with their prescriptions. During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Deobandi madrassas within Pakistan became increasingly radicalised by exposure to Arab Wahhabi fighters.



**226** Largely as a consequence of Pakistani support, Taliban forces advanced rapidly through southern and eastern Afghanistan, capturing Spin Boldak and Kandahar in late 1994 before advancing on the capital. In early 1995 the Taliban met the rear elements of Hekmatyar's forces besieging Kabul and were able to defeat them largely because Massoud kept the HIG front lines pinned down. Following the defeat of HIG, Taliban ranks were bolstered by the recruitment of many of Hekmatyar's Pashtun fighters as, once again, the advance of a regional force on the capital brought ethnic loyalties into play. Over the course of the next four years the Taliban gradually conquered more of the country as first Herat, then Kabul, Bamiyan, Mazar-e-Sharif and finally Taloqan fell. By January 2001 a memorandum from National Security Advisor, Richard Clarke, to Condoleezza Rice stated: *"the Northern Alliance may be effectively taken out this spring when fighting resumes after the winter thaw"*.

**227** The early Taliban rode a wave of popular support as they began to articulate the war-weariness of the Afghan public. Deeply disillusioned with the factionalism, criminality and personal ambitions of the mujahideen leaders, the Taliban promoted itself as a new force for honesty, unity and a return to fundamental Islamic values. Their public relations campaign consisted of:

1. Denouncing the failure of the mujahideen to establish security in the provinces whilst providing security in Taliban-administered areas through disarming the warlords and much of the population of heavy weapons.
2. Re-establishing a justice system and immediately charging a number of high-profile former mujahideen commanders with crimes such as theft and rape.
3. Imposing a conservative interpretation of shari'a law, particularly regarding dress codes (both men and women), entertainment (cinemas, music, TV, sport, etc), adultery (punished by stoning to death), theft (punished by the amputation of hands and feet) and murder

(punished by public execution).

4. Removing checkpoints which had long been extorting money from travellers and refusing to take bribes themselves.
5. Denouncing the drugs trade and (at least initially) banning the cultivation of poppy.

**228** Despite the harshness of the measures, locals continued to support the movement as the providers of a long-awaited security and stability and a return to traditional values. In particular, the movement attracted support from groups seeking elevated status in a new Taliban-administered Afghanistan. As such, the Taliban attracted support from Pashtuns (vice the Tajiks who held nominal power in Kabul during the civil war). Of these, traditionally marginalised Pashtun groups such as the Ghilzai confederation and the Panjpai Durrani sub-confederation constituted the core of their leadership. Notably, there were few Zirak Durrani in key Taliban command positions and the Taliban failed to attract popular support amongst the 'royal' Popalzai and Barakzai tribes, who favoured more moderate, traditional forms of governance.

### WHAT'S IN A NAME: THE TALIBAN?

A taleb (Arabic for 'student') is a student who seeks knowledge, as opposed to an ulema or mullah who gives knowledge. The name reflects the roots of the movement within rural, displaced, impoverished and otherwise marginalised madrassa students within southern Afghanistan and refugee camps in Pakistan

**229** Once established, the Taliban quickly switched from popular measures designed to generate support to repressive measures designed to enforce a strict observance with their religious decrees. The central instrument in their repression was the brutal religious police *Amr Bil Maroof Wa Nahi An al-Munkar* (Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Suppression of Vice) who were responsible for the monitoring of society and the enforcement of shari'a. Groups who came in for

particularly close scrutiny included Hazaras (who suffered ethnic cleansing at the hands of the Taliban), women (who were banned from work or even leaving the house without male relatives), Kabulis (who were thought to be irredeemably secular and corrupt), Tajiks and Uzbeks (who constituted the rank and file of the Northern Alliance) and Zirk Durrani (in particular the 'royal' Popalzai and Barakzai tribes who were the traditional 'class enemies' of the Ghilzai confederation from whom the Taliban attracted most of their support).

### **EARLY TALIBAN PROPAGANDA: *The Shroud of Muhammad***

In April 1996, Mullah Muhammad Omar orchestrated a propaganda coup that rippled across the mujahideen community. In order to establish his Islamic credentials and attract new recruits, Omar turned to the legend of the prophet's cloak. The cloak was housed in Kandahar's Khirka Sharif, one of the holiest places in Afghanistan, and the shrine of the founder of the Durrani dynasty, Ahmad Shah Durrani. An Afghan legend held that whoever retrieved the cloak from the shrine would be Amir al-Mu'minin (commander of the faithful). Omar removed the cloak from the shrine and, perching himself atop one of the buildings in Kandahar City, proceeded to wrap and unwrap the cloak from around himself in front of a large crowd of onlookers. The cloak ceremony ended with a declaration of jihad against the Northern Alliance, and those present swore bayat (allegiance) to Omar.

### **ADDENDUM: *Missed Opportunity for ISAF***

Unfortunately, in 2007 there was little coverage of the decision by the elders of Kandahar to formally strip Mullah Omar of the cloak and the corresponding

title Amir al-Mu'minin for his un-Islamic actions. This constituted a lost opportunity for a major propaganda victory over the Taliban.

**230** Perhaps as a result of the lack of scholarly input into early Taliban ideology (Mohammed Omar was a poor village mullah with little education and no prestigious tribal lineage), the movement quickly came under the influence of outside forces such as the ISI and Wahhabi Arabs left behind after the Soviet war. Chief of these external influences was the al Qaeda movement. With the rise of the Taliban, Osama bin Laden returned to Afghanistan and immediately began organising old Arab fighters, recruiting new ones and re-invigorating the network of jihadist training camps near the Pakistani border. In bin Laden's network the Taliban received a sizable, experienced and competent fighting force organised into a special unit, Brigade 55, which supported them in several of their bloodiest offensives against the Northern Alliance. Through supporting the Taliban, bin Laden received an entire country as a base of operations for global jihad and to launch attacks against the US and its allies (between 1996 and 2001, Al Qaeda trained an estimated 30,000 militants). The nexus between local Pashtun Deobandism and global Wahhabi terrorism finally began to attract the security concerns of the US and the wider international community.

**231** In 2000 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1333 imposing a complete arms ban on the Taliban, the closing of terrorist training camps and the seizure of Taliban assets outside Afghanistan. As international pressure against the Taliban mounted, exiled leaders such as Dostum, Ismail Khan and others returned to take up arms under the leadership of Massoud. September 2001 proved the turning point. On 4 September, Washington hosted the first Principals-level meeting across relevant departments to discuss terrorism in which it was agreed to begin supplying arms to



Massoud's Northern Alliance. Some 5 days later, on September 9, two al Qaeda operatives posing as Tunisian television journalists blew themselves up whilst interviewing Massoud, thereby stripping the US of its greatest potential ally in Afghanistan prior to al Qaeda's attack in the US homeland. Finally, barely two weeks following the 9/11 attacks, Hamid Karzai, the exiled Popalzai tribal leader, together with a few friends and supporters, headed into Afghanistan, thus beginning a new chapter in the country's 30 year conflict.



*The attacks on the World Trade Centre, 11 September 2001. Photo: Source unknown.*

## A NEW BEGINNING

### The Collapse of the Taliban

**232** The US war against the Taliban began on October 7 2001. Despite amassing over 60,000 men, including approximately 9,000 Pakistanis, the Taliban collapsed within a matter of days. Following significant bombardment in the weeks preceding the attack, CIA and Northern Alliance forces captured the strategically important city of Mazar-e-Sharif on November 10. Within three days of the fall of Mazar, Northern Alliance forces had taken most of the significant urban centres in northern, western and central Afghanistan, including Bamiyan (November 11), Herat (November 12) and Kabul (November 13).

### THE CO-OPTION OF THE TALIBAN

*"Like so many mujahideen I believed in the Taliban when they first appeared in 1994 and promised to end warlordism, establish law and order and then call a Loya Jirga to decide who should rule Afghanistan. The first Taliban I met told me that the jihad had become a disgrace and the civil war was destroying the country. After the Taliban captured Kandahar, I gave them \$50,000 to help them out, and then handed them a cache of weapons I had hidden near Kandahar ... they were good people initially, but the tragedy was that very soon after they were taken over by the ISI and became a proxy ... I realised what was happening when I was called into the Pakistani Foreign Office to discuss the modalities for my becoming the Taliban envoy at the UN. Can you imagine it? Pakistan was setting up the Taliban's diplomatic corps. I refused and walked out. Later the Taliban were to come under the influence of al Qaeda. That is when I began to organise against them. In 1998 I warned the Americans and the British many, many times that Osama bin Laden was now playing a leadership role within the Taliban, but who was listening? Nobody"*

*- Hamid Karzai, September 2001*

**233** In the south, Karzai, with only a few dozen fighters was attempting to rally support among the Pashtuns in Uruzgan when he found himself surrounded by Taliban fighters. Unwilling to risk the death of the only significant Pashtun leader resisting the Taliban, a US Special Forces team extracted him for a few days whilst his men took Tarin Kowt. From there, Karzai negotiated the surrender of Kandahar where the Taliban senior leadership had retreated. For his part, Mullah Omar prolonged negotiations long enough for the majority of Taliban fighters

holed up in the city to escape across the border to Pakistan, back to the refugee camps and madrassas from where the movement first arose.

### Interim Government

**234** As the Taliban collapsed, international attention turned to state-building. Kofi Annan appointed one of the UN's most experienced envoys, Lakhdar Brahimi, as Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) and tasked him to develop a transitional plan for the country. The plan called for a meeting of Afghan leaders and international negotiators to appoint an interim government as soon as possible. The meeting took place in Bonn, Germany. Amidst unprecedented regional cooperation between Iran, Russia, Pakistan, India, the US and Europe, international negotiators eventually forced an agreement between competing Afghan factions. The Bonn Agreement called for a *"broad-based, gender-sensitive, multi-ethnic, fully representative government"*. It also developed a roadmap for the establishment of the structures of a modern, democratic state, including a functioning bureaucracy, legal system and security forces. Key milestones included the convening of a loya jirga to ratify the interim government, followed by democratic elections and a second loya jirga to develop a new Afghan constitution.

**235** Despite the appointment of Karzai (a southern Pashtun) as interim President, Bonn represented a victory for the Northern Alliance who emerged from the conference holding the crucial ministries of defence, interior, intelligence and foreign affairs. Ethnic representation in the interim cabinet consisted of 11 Pashtuns (mainly from the north), 8 Tajiks, 5 Hazara and 3 Uzbeks. Apart from Karzai himself, no southern Pashtuns were represented. Crucially, the Bonn Agreement did not constitute a formal peace accord between victors and vanquished. The Taliban were not represented at the conference as they had not accepted defeat. Safely ensconced in their new Pakistani sanctuary, the ousted regime began regrouping, raising funds, re-arming and planning the next phase in the conflict.



*Afghanistan conference in Bonn, Germany.*

*Photo: Source unknown.*

**236** The Emergency Loya Jirga envisaged by the Bonn Agreement was held in Kabul in 2002. Zahir Shah, the 87 year old exiled King, returned to Afghanistan to open proceedings. Some 1000 elected and 500 appointed delegates attended what turned out to be the most broadly representative body to gather in the country's history. Afghans from practically every ethnic group, tribe and community (including several women) were represented. Despite several days of debate, Karzai was re-appointed and his cabinet returned with only minor changes. Following the success of the loya jirga, another assembly was convened in December 2003 to draft a new constitution. Once again the jirga represented a broad cross section of Afghanistan's ethnic groups and political factions. The assembly decided to adopt a presidential system with a highly centralised executive (rather than a parliamentary system in which power would be devolved to the regions through their representatives). The resulting constitution was based largely on Zahir Shah's 1964 version with the office of President substituting for that of the King.

*"Our country is nothing but a ruined land. Oh God! The journey is long and I am a novice. I need your help".*

*- Hamid Karzai's Inauguration Speech*

**237** For their part, international donors agreed to fund the establishment of a new Afghan National Army and to facilitate the restructuring of the Ministry of Defence to achieve proportional representation of ethnic groups in key posts (prior to the jirga 30 out of 33 directorates were controlled by Panjsheri Tajiks). However, around the same time, the US began funding and arming local militias in order to protect bases and supply routes, creating overnight millionaires and parallel security structures which threatened to undermine the development of state security forces. Against this backdrop the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) intervened, holding a conference in Tokyo at which they developed a comprehensive plan for the disarming, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of the militia, entitled *Afghanistan's New Beginning's Program*. The UNAMA plan, which began in October 2003, called for the banning of all militia and provided for US\$200, food packages and alternative livelihoods (agricultural products, jobs, skills training etc) for every militiaman who surrendered his weapons. By the end of 2004 the UNAMA program had succeeded in disarming over 60,000 of Afghanistan's estimated 100,000 militiamen. In addition, several warlords running their own private armies had handed in their tanks and artillery or been sacked from senior government posts.

**238** The high point of Afghanistan's new evolution came with the country's first ever presidential election in 2004 in which Afghans turned out in large numbers (including many women). While 18 candidates qualified for the ballot, only 4 constituted serious contenders. In addition to Karzai, these included Yunus Qanuni (a Panjsheri Tajik who fought under Massoud), Rashid Dostum (the Uzbek warlord who controlled Mazar during the Civil War) and the Hazara leader Hajji Mohammad Mohaqiq. The election was successful in that it was not marred by significant violence, deemed relatively credible by international observers and produced a clear winner, Hamid Karzai, with 55% of the approximately 8 million votes cast.



*The Inauguration of President Karzai. Photo: Source unknown.*

**239** Legislative elections were held the following year. As a result of President Karzai's decision to disallow the listing of political parties on ballot papers, candidates were forced to run as individuals. Many voters knew little about the candidates they were asked to vote for and turnout proved to be substantially lower than the presidential elections the previous year. The resulting legislature quickly became the centre of opposition to the Karzai administration (similar to the relationship between the White House and Congress in the US system), refusing to ratify a number of executive appointments and criticising the administration's record of achievement.

### Reconstruction & Development

**240** Next the government and international community began to focus on the reconstruction and long-term development of Afghanistan. Hamid Karzai, Kofi Annan and Tony Blair co-chaired an international conference in London in which 66 States and 15 international organisations pledged to support an Afghan National Development Strategy (an interim draft of which was presented at the conference) with US\$10.5 billion over the course of five years. The agreement (known as the Afghanistan Compact) established a number of benchmarks across three critical and inter-dependent areas of activity: (i) security, (ii) governance, rule of law and human rights, (iii) economic and social development. The Compact also provided for the creation of a

Joint Coordination & Monitoring Board (JCMB) to monitor progress toward the goals and evaluate the effectiveness of the aid being provided.

**241** Following the London conference the Afghan government drafted the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) 2008-2013. This strategy was completed after two years of extensive consultations around the country and represented a comprehensive five year plan for meeting the benchmarks articulated in the Compact. In addition, it served as the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) helping secure debt relief from the IMF and loans from the World Bank.

### Counterinsurgency & Stabilisation

**242** In the years following the publication of the ANDS, progress in the country was slow. Development in the south was hampered by the rise of a virulent insurgency which led to the withdrawal of many development agencies and non-government organisations (NGO's) from remote districts. Political transformation stalled as a result of a conscious decision by President Karzai to begin forging an Anti-Taliban alliance of regional power-brokers capable of resisting the insurgency. As a consequence, anti-corruption measures, institution building and service delivery all suffered.



*Dr Abdullah Abdullah, runner up in the 2009 Presidential Election and candidate for 2014. Photo: Source unknown.*

**243** In a demonstration of flexible alignment politics, by the time of the 2009 elections, President Karzai had secured as his Vice Presidential running

mates some of his principal opponents and ardent critics during his first term, including one of his main rivals in the previous election. The election team consisting of Mohammed Fahim and Karim Khalilli constituted a who's who of former warlords. To make matters worse Sher Mohammed Akhundzada, a notorious drug baron who had been caught with 9 tonnes of opium in his office whilst Governor of Helmand, was appointed campaign manager. Despite pulling together a 'dream team' of Tajik (Fahim), Hazara (Khalili) and Pashtun (Karzai, Akhundzada) regional power-brokers, in the weeks leading up to the election former foreign affairs minister, Dr Abdullah Abdullah, emerged as a serious challenger and possible victor were he to succeed in forcing a second round run-off between the two candidates. Knowing this, some of Karzai's supporters were determined to win a first round majority and engaged in massive electoral fraud. The subsequent fracas resulted in the disqualification of thousands of ballot boxes by Afghanistan's Electoral Complaints Commission and a scheduled second round election. However, unconvinced that the second round would prove less fraudulent than the first, Dr Abdullah chose not to participate in the 2nd round, allowing Karzai to be returned to power. Whilst ultimately successful, Karzai's victory came at the cost of a massive loss of legitimacy both internally and externally.

**244** Around the same time a new US President, Barack Obama, embarked on a new strategy which had as its goal to 'disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda in its safe havens in Pakistan, and prevent their return to both Pakistan and Afghanistan'. The so-called 'Af-Pak' strategy emerged after a series of exhaustive reviews of US policy in the region conducted earlier in 2009. The strategy called for increased military and civilian resources for Afghanistan, revitalised regional diplomacy and a significant expansion in the drone program in Pakistan. Inherent in the new approach was the recognition that the conjoined states of Afghanistan and Pakistan constituted one strategic entity, with instability in either country undermining security in the other.



*President Obama appoints GEN Stanley McChrystal as the new COMISAF with a mandate to implement a new Strategy in Afghanistan. Photo: Source unknown.*

**245** Whilst President Obama set a date for ISAF to begin transitioning responsibility to local security forces, most analysts recognised that a significant international troop presence would be required for many years to come. In the absence of effective governance, withdrawal would be highly risky, not only to the fledgling Afghan democracy, but the wider region, which remained susceptible to terrorism, insurgency and Islamic revolution.

The coalition campaign plan was revised under newly appointed Commander of ISAF (COMISAF), GEN Stanley McChrystal. The focus became 'population-centric' counterinsurgency and, ultimately, the transfer of security responsibility to a capable Afghan National Security Force (ANSF). To implement the new concept of operations the US increased its troop commitment by more than 30,000 personnel (the West Point 'surge') for a limited period to regain the initiative against a rising insurgency and provide security to roughly 100 key terrain districts—essentially Afghanistan's major population, economic and transport corridors.

**246** ISAF security operations now sought to separate the local population from insurgents, and provide the time and space in which improved governance and development could take hold. This task was assisted by an almost threefold increase in the number of deployed civilians. Increased pressure

was exerted on both the Afghan and Pakistani governments—to eliminate official corruption in Afghanistan, and cease support for the Taliban from within Pakistan. Meanwhile, the US ramped up its drone program targeting key insurgent leaders in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Finally, training and mentoring the ANSF, previously a peripheral activity, became the principal focus of the ISAF mission. New targets for both ANA (171,600) and ANP (134,000) were set for the end of 2011 to coincide with a planned US drawdown.

### **Transition, Withdrawal & Decade of Transformation**

**247** Leaders of the 48 ISAF troop contributing states and the Afghan Government agreed at the November 2010 NATO Summit in Lisbon, Portugal, that the ANSF would have full responsibility for security across all 34 of Afghanistan's provinces by the end of 2014. The summit closed with the Declaration of Enduring Partnership and the adoption of Inteqal ('transition' in Dari and Pashtu) as the process by which security responsibility was to be progressively transferred from ISAF to Afghan leadership. In March 2011 ISAF began a new chapter in its mission, with the announcement by President Karzai of the first tranche of municipalities, districts and provinces to enter the inteqal process.

**248** On 2 May 2011 the US attained a significant milestone in its counter-terrorism campaign when Osama bin Laden was killed in the Op NEPTUNE'S SPEAR raid on his compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The following month President Obama announced a phased troop reduction, arguing that substantial progress in the fight against al Qaeda in the Af-Pak region allowed for a recovery of US surge forces. The timeline allowed for a thinning of US forces in Afghanistan, with the entire surge force of 33,000 troops scheduled to be withdrawn by September 2012 and most of the remaining 68,000 US personnel to be drawn down at a steady pace until the end of the ISAF mandate in December 2014.



**249** 2011 saw a significant deterioration in US-Pakistan relations. The year began with the Raymond Davis incident (in which a US embassy official shot and killed two men in Lahore, was jailed, and then subsequently released after the US paid the families of the deceased a total of \$2.4 million). The Abbottabad raid on Bin Laden's compound in May seriously embarrassed the Pakistani Military, who were in the process of attempting to restore their reputation when they were effectively labelled sponsors of terrorism by the Chairman of the US Joint Chief's of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, who declaring that the insurgent group known as the Haqqani Network, was a "*veritable arm of the [Pakistani] Inter-Services Intelligence Agency*". The crunch came in November when a US air strike resulted in the death of 24 Pakistan Army personnel in the Mohmand Agency of Pakistan. In response, Pakistan closed ISAF ground lines of communication (GLOCs) through its territory to NATO convoys. The resultant stand-off hampered ANSF equipping and fielding efforts by back-logging thousands of tons of equipment. The Pakistan GLOCs remained closed to ISAF resupply convoys until July 2012, placing increased demands on the coalition air bridge and the Northern Distribution Network as ISAF retrograde activity got underway.

**250** Continued military pressure through partnered ISAF and ANSF operations throughout 2011 and into 2012 widened the gap between insurgents and the population in key centers in southern Afghanistan; limiting insurgent freedom of movement, disrupting internal safe havens, degrading Taliban command and control (C2), and diminishing insurgent funding by targeting the drug trade. As insurgent capacity to challenge Afghan security forces were eroded, they resorted increasingly to asymmetric means to reassert influence and regain the initiative. These included high profile attacks, assassinations, kidnappings, intimidation tactics, and strategic messaging campaigns leveraging popular dissatisfaction with Afghanistan's endemic corruption.

**251** A disturbing development was the rise in insider attacks from 2010 onwards. Insider attacks occur when ANSF members knowingly attack and/or helped facilitate an attack against their coalition partners. Whilst statistically small in number, insider attacks have now become a defining characteristic of the Afghan war and have had a significant negative impact on the ISAF mission. As of October 2013 there had been over 107 reported incidents resulting in 153 coalition forces killed and a further 222 wounded. 2012, in particular, saw a substantial rise in attacks generating alarm within NATO troop contributing nations and threatening the success of the transition process.

**252** Regardless of whether directly involved or not, insider attacks have been exploited by the insurgency. Perpetrators who manage to escape will often link up with local insurgents who facilitate their evacuation across the border to Pakistan. Here their exploits are incorporated into propaganda videos aimed at summoning support and inspiring other sympathetic Afghans to conduct similar attacks. In this way the Taliban have been able to capitalise on the phenomenon regardless of whether they were involved in the planning or conduct of the incident.

**253** In December 2011, the Afghan Government chaired the second Bonn Conference, which discussed civil aspects of transition and the long term engagement of the international community. This was followed by the July 2012 Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan, where representatives from around 70 donor countries and international organisations discussed ongoing development assistance. Facing an almost certain economic down-turn as a result of the looming absence of large numbers of international forces and agencies, donors pledged US\$16.0 billion in aid to Afghanistan over four years under the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) to help mitigate the anticipated funding gap after transition. Up to 50 per cent of this assistance is earmarked for on-budget assistance, provided that the Afghan Government implements political and economic reforms necessary to

improve governance, hold credible elections, make public institutions more accountable, and tackle corruption.

### ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Military and civilian aid to Afghanistan in 2010-11 totaled US\$15.7 billion. Afghanistan's GDP, excluding opium production, over the same period was only marginally higher at US\$15.9 billion.

*Afghanistan Economic Update (World Bank, Washington DC, 2012).*

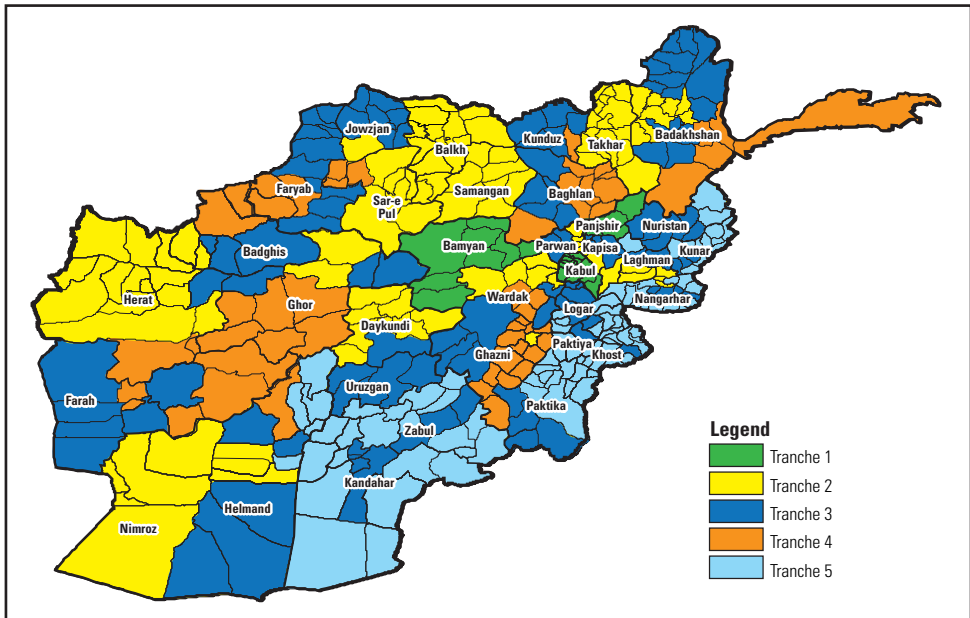
**254** The May 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago saw leaders of all ISAF troop contributing states announce a vision for a new NATO-led mission to train, advise and assist the ANSF, at the invitation of the Afghan Government, and a political commitment to provide ongoing funding for local forces. The various parties also agreed to an accelerated transition timetable. According to the newly endorsed schema the ANSF were to be in the lead for security throughout Afghanistan by mid-2013, with the ISAF mission by then having shifted effectively from combat to a security force assistance construct. On the sidelines of Chicago, Afghanistan also concluded multi-dimensional bilateral partnership agreements with NATO, the US and other alliance members, and partner states (including Australia). The aim of these partnerships is to support Afghanistan's development, security and governance, and to promote regional cooperation through the so-called 'decade of transformation' (2015-2024) that follows the Lisbon Summit goal of full transition by the end of 2014.

**255** In his February 2013 State of the Union Address, President Obama announced that 34,000 US troops (from a force of 66,000) are to exit the theatre by February 2014. The residual number will reduce to a much smaller enduring force which is to remain behind after 2014; in roles possibly ranging from institutional capacity building to counter-terrorism. The UK, among other major

ISAF members followed suit drawing down its 9,000-strong force in Afghanistan to 5,200 in December 2013. Similarly in November 2013 the Australian Government announced the closure of Multi-National Base–Tarin Kot (MNB-TK) and the withdrawal of over 1,000 ADF personnel from the country.

**256** At a meeting in Brussels in June 2013 NATO Defence Ministers, with counterparts from other ISAF troop contributing states, endorsed the concept for RESOLUTE SUPPORT—a non-combat train, advise and assist mission beginning in 2015. This was followed by the 18 June announcement by President Karzai of Transition Tranche 5 that has Afghan forces in the operational lead for security nationwide.

**257** A joint NATO-Afghan Government ceremony heralding these achievements in Kabul, however, is almost upstaged by the inauguration of a Taliban political bureau in Doha, Qatar. President Karzai immediately objected to the portrayal of the Taliban mission as an embassy of an Afghan government in exile, and pulled out of the US-led peace talks. Negotiations over the US-Afghanistan Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA), which had been underway since November 2012, are also briefly stalled due to the abortive Doha peace process and Hamid Karzai's reluctance to sign the document. The BSA is to serve as a legal framework for the presence of US forces after 2014, dictating the scope and jurisdiction of their activities. However, progress throughout 2013 is slow due to hurdles such as whether US personnel will be allowed immunity from prosecution by local authorities. The go-ahead for the proposed non-combat NATO follow-on mission (Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT) however is contingent upon the successful negotiation of the US-Afghan BSA.



*Afghanistan Transition Map.*

**258** In preparation for the 5 April 2014 Presidential elections, Afghanistan's Independent Electoral Commission opened candidate nominations from 16 September to 6 October 2013. The next electoral cycle, including national assembly elections in 2015, will be a key test of the country's transition to a stable polity since the tainted elections of 2009 and 2010. The 2014 presidential poll is to be Afghanistan's first ever democratic transfer of power as President Karzai completes his second and final constitutional term as head of state. Whereas the Taliban are vehemently against the election and will not participate, the past year has seen Afghanistan's various political groupings negotiate over possible consensus candidates and coalitions to contest the elections. Needless to say, the elections must be deemed credible if Afghanistan is to receive critical ongoing support from the international community.



## CHRONOLOGY

### Aryan Settlement

**2000 BCE** - Vedic Aryans cross the Kabul River from India and settle in the area of present-day Afghanistan.

### Persian Expansion

**550 BCE** - Cyrus II conquers Afghanistan. Darius the Great consolidates Persian power.

### Hellenistic Period

**327 BCE** - Alexander defeats Darius III and conquers Afghanistan. The country is subsequently incorporated into successive Hellenistic empires (Seleucid Empire and Graeco-Bactrian Kingdom).

### Buddhist Kingdom

**127** - Most of Afghanistan incorporated into the Buddhist Kushan Empire under King Kanishka. Bamiyan Buddhist colonies established.

### Hepthalite Invasion

**400** - Hepthalites (White Huns) invade from the central Asian steppe and destroy most of Afghan Buddhist culture. Hepthalites are thought to be ancestors of modern day Pashtuns, according to some theorists.

### Persian Control

**550** - Persian Sassanids defeat Hepthalites and take control of the area.

### Arab Expansion

**637** - Arab Muslims defeat Sassanids at battle of Qadisiya. Herat falls to Arabs in 651 and Kandahar in 700. Umayyad caliphs introduce Islam to Afghanistan in subsequent years.

### Ghaznavid Dynasty

**962** - Former Turkic slave, Alptigin, seizes Ghazni and establishes the Ghaznavid

dynasty, the first Muslim dynasty in Afghanistan.

### Ghorid Dynasty

**1140** - Ghorids from central Afghanistan (Ghor Province) raze Ghazni and conquer northern India.

### Mongols and Mughals

**1221** - Genghis Khan launches a devastating attack on Afghanistan, destroying irrigation systems, causing famine, desertification and a massive loss of civilian life. Mongols thought to be ancestors of modern day Hazaras.

**1361** - Tamerlane, a descendant of Mongol settlers and Turkic locals, establishes an Empire from India to Turkey with his capital in Herat.

**1526** - Babur, a descendent of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, establishes the Mughal Empire on the Indian sub-continent after defeating the Delhi Sultanate at the Battle of Panipat.

### Persian Restoration

**1560** - Persian Safavids conquer western Afghanistan and gradually extend control over Pashtun territories. Safavid hegemony lasts for 200 years, but their power in the area is always tenuous.

### Afghan Rule

**1708** - The Hotaki dynasty, centred on Kandahar, is founded by Mir Wais Khan Hotak, chief of the Ghilzai Pashtuns after the defeat of two Persian armies. Mir Wais' son, Mahmud, invades Persia and sacks its capital, Isfahan.

**1738** - Persians retake Kandahar from the Ghilzais with the support of Ahmed Shah Abdali and over 4,000 Durrani fighters. Ahmed Shah Abdali subsequently establishes the Durrani Empire (1747), the precursor to the modern state of Afghanistan.

**1773** - Capital of Durrani Empire moved from Kandahar to Kabul.

### **British Incursions**

**1839-1842** - First Anglo-Afghan War.

**1878-1880** - Second Anglo-Afghan War.

**1880** - Adur Rahman succeeds to the throne and begins building a centralised State with the support of the British.

**1887** - British and Russians establish the Northern boundary of Afghanistan at the Amu Darya River.

**1893** - Durand Line Agreement establishes the south-eastern border of Afghanistan, separating the country from British India.

**1919** - Third Anglo-Afghan War. August 19 becomes Afghan Independence Day.

### **Modernising Period**

**1919** - Amanullah Khan embarks upon substantial modernising reforms.

**1929** - King Amanullah abdicates due to civil unrest over his modernisation program. Nadir Khan assumes the throne and reduces the pace of reform.

**1933** - Zahir Shah ascends throne after death of his father. Introduces constitutional and democratic reforms and reigns for 40 years.

**1947** - Britain withdraws from India. Pakistan carved out of majority Muslim areas in British India. Afghanistan's Parliament denounces the Durand Treaty and refuses to recognise boundary between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Some Pashtuns in Pakistan proclaim an independent Pashtunistan

**1961** - Afghanistan and Pakistan close to War over Pashtunistan question.

**1964** - Zahir Shah creates a new Afghan constitution providing for free elections,

civil rights, women's emancipation and universal suffrage.

### **Instability, Occupation and Civil War**

**1973** - Mohammed Daoud Khan seizes power in coup which is immediately followed by a period of instability.

**1978** - PDPA seize control of the State during the Saur Revolution.

**1979** - Soviet Union invades Afghanistan and installs Babrak Karmal as Prime Minister. The mujahideen resist the occupation.

**1982** - Mujahideen gain control of rural areas as nearly 5 million Afghans flee the war.

**1989** - The Soviet Union completes its troop withdrawal. However despite all predictions the Najibullah regime remains in power for a further three years.

**1992** - Najibullah regime fails and Afghanistan descends into civil war.

### **Taliban, al Qaeda and US Invasion**

**1994** - The Taliban emerges from within Kandahari and Pakistani madrassas and refugee camps near the Afghan-Pakistan border.

**1996** - The Taliban take Kabul with support from Pakistani fighters and military advisors. Osama bin Laden leaves Sudan and arrives in Afghanistan.

**1998** - The Taliban controls two-thirds of Afghanistan. Al Qaeda bombs US embassies in Africa.

**2000** - The UN adopts resolution 1333 enforcing sanctions on the Taliban which are largely ignored by neighbouring Pakistan as it continues to support its Pashtun clients.

**Sept 2001** - Ahmad Shah Massoud, commander of the Northern Alliance, is assassinated by al Qaeda suicide

bombers two days prior to the al Qaeda attack on the US homeland.

**Oct 2001** - The US and its allies launch air strikes against the Taliban in support of a major Northern Alliance offensive.

**Nov 2001** - Allied forces take Mazar-e-Sharif, Bamiyan, Herat and Kabul. Taliban retreat to Kandahar.

### **A New Beginning**

**Dec 2001** - Bonn Conference establishes the Afghan Interim Authority. Hamid Karzai sworn in as Head of Interim Government. Taliban escape from Kandahar and reconstitute in Quetta, Pakistan.

**Jan 2002** - Tokyo Conference. Over 50 countries pledge assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

**June 2002** - Karzai elected Interim President by Emergency Loya Jirga.

**Mar 2003** - US-led invasion of Iraq.

**Aug 2003** - NATO assumes leadership of ISAF.

**Dec 2003** - ISAF expands outside of Kabul, beginning in the North (completed Oct 2004), followed by the West (completed Sept 2005), South (July 2006) and East (Oct 2006).

**Jan 2004** - The Constitutional Loya Jirga pass the 160-article Afghan Constitution.

**Oct 2004** - Karzai wins Afghanistan's first democratic election.

**Sept 2005** - First National Assembly elections in three decades (Wolesi Jirga).

**Jan 2006** - London Conference produces the Afghanistan Compact. Donors pledge over US\$10 billion in increased aid and establish the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board to monitor aid effectiveness.

**2006-2007** - Intensification of the

insurgency.

**Aug 2006** - Dutch and Australian forces enter Uruzgan Province as part of the NATO-led ISAF Stage 3 expansion into southern Afghanistan. The Netherlands Task Force Uruzgan assumes command of the PRT.

**May 2007** - The Taliban's most senior military commander, Mullah Dadullah is killed during fighting with US and Afghan forces.

**Apr 2008** - Afghan Government releases the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) 2008-2013. More than US\$15 billion in foreign aid is pledged to Afghanistan.

**Apr 2009** - The Australian Government steps up support for the ISAF mission by increasing its military commitment by 40 per cent to a new authorised ceiling of 1,550 ADF personnel in Afghanistan.

**May 2009** - US troop uplift. Over 14,000 extra troops begin arriving.

**Aug 2009** - Afghan Presidential and Provincial Council elections. Karzai wins a second term despite widespread allegation of electoral fraud and only following the withdrawal of his main rival, Dr Abdullah Abdullah, prior to a scheduled second round run-off election.

**Dec 2009** - President Obama announces the 'Westpoint surge' of an extra 30,000 troops and introduces a timeline for the US drawdown to commence.

**Feb 2010** - Op MOSHTARAK begins. Dutch Government collapses over the continuing presence of its troops in Afghanistan.

**June 2010** - President Obama removes GEN Stanley McChrystal as Commander of NATO Forces in Afghanistan and announces GEN David Petraeus as successor.

**Aug 2010** - Dutch troops withdraw from Uruzgan Province. US forces enter the Province under COL Jim Creighton and establish the ISAF-flagged Combined Team Uruzgan (CTU) with Australia, Slovakia, Singapore and New Zealand. Australia assumes the lead of PRT Uruzgan.

**Sept 2010** - National Assembly elections (Wolesi Jirga).

**Nov 2010** - NATO summit in Lisbon, Portugal, and the adoption of Inteqal (transition) whereby Afghan forces will gradually assume responsibility for security. The process is scheduled to begin in 2011 in certain districts and provinces and, based on conditions, will gradually expand throughout the country in five tranches. The aim is for Afghan forces to be in the lead country-wide by the end of 2014.

**Mar 2011** - Phased implementation of transition commences with the announcement of Transition Tranche 1.

**Apr 2011** - Burning of the Qu'ran by a pastor in the US sparks violent protests across Afghanistan. UN staff are killed when rioters overrun the UNAMA facility in Mazar-e-Sharif.

**Mar 2011** - Osama bin Laden is killed in the Op NEPTUNE'S SPEAR raid on his compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

**Jun 2011** - President Obama orders a recovery of surge forces, with 33,000 US troops to be withdrawn by September 2012. Most of the remaining 68,000 US personnel are to be drawn down by the end of 2014.

**Jul 2011** - Insurgents conduct a series of complex attacks against Afghan Government targets in Tarin Kot.

**Sep 2011** - Assassination of former President of Afghanistan and Chairman of the High Peace Council, Burhanuddin

Rabbani.

**Nov 2011** - Closure of NATO ground lines of communication through Pakistan. They remain closed until July 2012.

Dec 2011 - International Conference on Afghanistan (Bonn II Conference).

**May 2012** - NATO Chicago Summit. The Australian Government concludes the Comprehensive Long Term Partnership Agreement Between Australia and Afghanistan. The whole of Uruzgan Province and the associated Gizab District in Daykundi Province are included in Transition Tranche 3, referred to as a 'stretch tranche' as it included contested areas and assumed greater risk than previous tranches.

**Jun 2012** - Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan. Conference participants pledge US\$16 billion in aid to Afghanistan under the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework.

**Nov 2012** - Washington and Kabul begin negotiations toward a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) that are to conclude with a year.

**Mar 2013** - Prime Minister Julia Gillard and MINDEF Stephen Smith jointly announce the closure of Multi-National Base Tarin Kot (MNBTK) and the withdrawal of at least 1,000 ADF personnel from Afghanistan by the end of 2013.

**Jun 2013** - Transition Tranche 5 and 'Milestone 2013'. ISAF officially shifts its main effort from fighting the insurgency to supporting the ANSF, now in the operational lead for security throughout Afghanistan.

**Oct 2013** - US Secretary of State, John Kerry, and President Karzai agree to a partial BSA that will enter into force in 2015 subject to ratification by a Loya Jirga and the Afghan National Assembly.

The issue of legal immunity for US personnel in Afghanistan, however, remains unresolved. Neither will the US agree to Afghan Government demands for security guarantees against external attack.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott and the Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten, attend a Recognition Ceremony at MNBTK ahead of the withdrawal of coalition forces from Uruzgan and the handover of the base to Afghan authorities. The Prime Minister states: 'Australia's longest war is ending, not with victory, not with defeat, but with, we hope, an Afghanistan that's better for our presence here'.

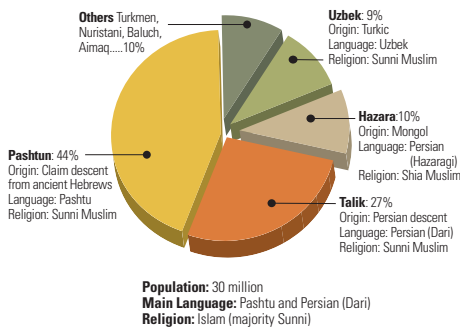
**Nov 2013** - More than 2,000 senior Afghan representatives participate in a four-day Loya Jirga endorsing the BSA, which includes immunity from Afghan courts for US personnel, allowing them to remain in Afghanistan beyond 2014. President Karzai, however, defers signing the document (even after ratification from the National Assembly) until after the April 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council elections.

## Chapter 3 – Society

- Ethnicity
- Language
- Tribal Afghans
- Afghan Customs & Culture
- Religion

### ETHNICITY

**301** Reflecting its location astride historic trade, migration and invasion routes, modern Afghanistan has emerged from its tumultuous history as a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual society. Most of its 30 million people trace their ancestry to Persian, Turkic or Mongol invaders – many a mix thereof.



**302 Pashtuns.** The Pashtuns are the largest single ethnic group and have been the dominant political force since the formation of the Afghan State. Approximately 44% of Afghanistan's estimated 30 million people are Pashtun. Of these, half belong to the Durrani tribal confederation (which predominates in the southern plateau) and the other half, their historical rivals, the Ghilzai (of the eastern mountains near the Pakistani border). Whilst concentrated in the south and east, many Pashtun communities have been established north of the Hindu Kush as a result of resettlement

programs during the 19th and 20th century. Pashtuns may speak either Pashtu or Dari (Persian), with the majority of the urban educated elite speaking Dari whilst rural communities rely almost exclusively on Pashtu.

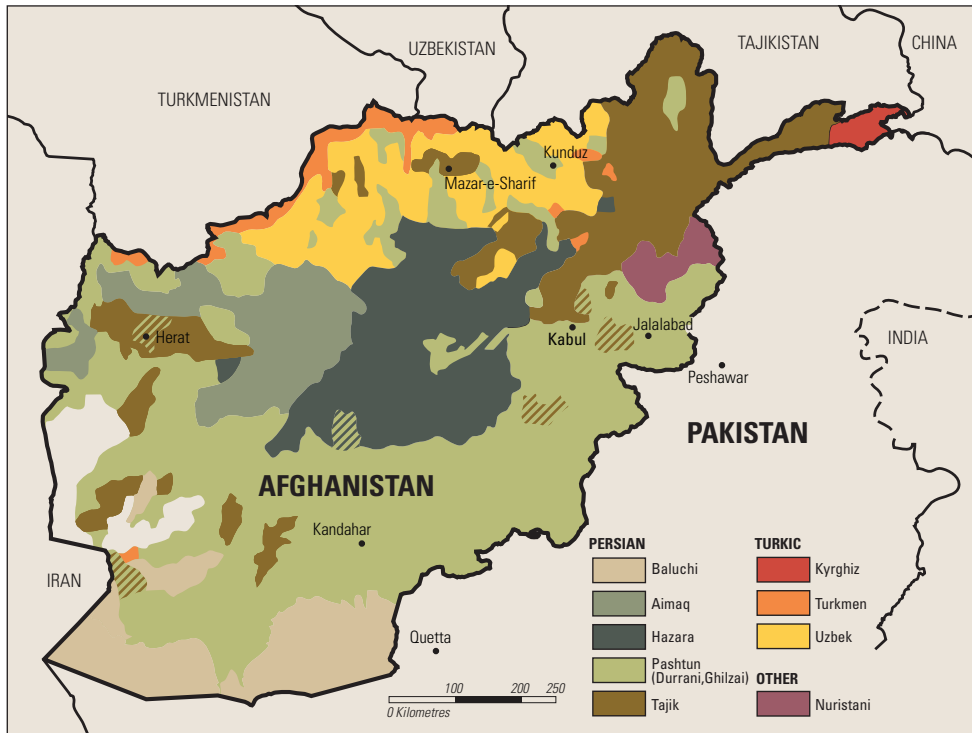
**303 Tajiks** comprise the second largest ethnic group, numbering some 8 million, or 27%. The Tajiks lay claim to the longest continuous habitation of the area and trace their ancestry back to the Persian Empire in the 4th Century BCE (prior to Alexander the Great). Of Persian descent, they live predominantly in two enclaves: one between Kabul and the Tajikistan border; the other in the west, centred on the city of Herat. Unlike the largely rural Pashtuns, Tajiks are city dwellers and dominate most of Afghanistan's major urban centres, including Kabul, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, Taloqan and Ghazni. Typically, Tajiks will identify with location over ethnicity, preferring to refer to themselves as Panjsheeri, Kabuli, Herati, etc. Because they make up the bulk of Afghanistan's educated elite, they have considerable wealth and political influence. Tajiks are also the principal inhabitants of the republic of Tajikistan across the northern border.

**304 Hazaras** are the third largest ethnic group comprising around 10% of the population. Their name means "thousand" in Persian and refers to their possible descent from Genghis Khan's army, which marched into the area during the 12th century and was organised into groups of 1000 men. After the Mongol Empire dissolved, soldiers and their families settled in the area and began to adopt



*Hazara Elder.*  
 Photo: Source unknown.

Persian customs, such as converting to Islam (Shi'a) and adopting Persian as their spoken language. Though intermixing with indigenous Afghans has occurred since, Hazaras retain many of the facial features of their Mongol forebears. As a result of Pashtun expansionism during the Durrani period,



*Afghan Ethno-Linguistic Groups.*

the Hazaras were driven to the barren dry central highlands west of Kabul (known as the Hazarajat). They speak a form of Persian called *Hazaragi*, which is differentiated from Dari by its words of Mongol origin.

**305 Uzbeks** are the most populous of Afghanistan's Turkic peoples, constituting some 9% of the total population. They are found predominantly in the north-western parts of the country and are descended from Turks who frequently raided the area from their base in the Central Asian Steppe. Over time these Turkic peoples intermingled with local Persians to become the distinct ethnic group they are today. Most Uzbeks are Sunni Muslim and are closely related to the Turkmen. The Uzbeks of Afghanistan are usually bilingual, fluent in both Dari and Uzbek. They are also the principal inhabitants of Uzbekistan across the northern border.

**306 Others.** There are several smaller ethnic groups scattered around the country. These include:

- **Turkmen** of the north-west border areas (adjacent Turkmenistan) who constitute about 3% of the population and whose origins and customs are similar to that of the Uzbeks.
- **Nuristanis**, who constitute around 1% of the population and who live in the remote mountains on the Pakistani border north-east of Kabul. Nuristanis claim to be descendants of Alexander the Great and were the last of Afghanistan's main ethnic groups to convert to Islam (in 1896).
- **Baluch** who constitute less than 1% of the population and who drive their flocks between grazing grounds on either side of the Durand Line.



- Nomadic and semi-nomadic **Aimaqs**, whose origin is vague, but generally inhabit the mountains west of the Hazarajat.

## LANGUAGE

**307** The two official languages of Afghanistan are **Dari** (50%) and **Pashtu** (35%). Other widely spoken languages include Turkic dialects (11%) such as Uzbek and Turkmen. Most educated Afghans are bilingual.

## TRIBAL AFGHANISTAN

**308** **Tribe.** The concept of 'tribe' and its relationship to both 'ethnicity' and 'modernity' is hotly contested. Initially anthropologists used the notion of 'tribal societies' to denote a transitional phase in social evolution from pre-modern 'bands' of hunter-gatherers to modern 'states'. However, few anthropologists today accept this linear view of societal evolution and, as a consequence, the term 'tribe' has fallen out of favour. Where it is used it is generally considered to describe a form of social organisation which is:

- Structured largely on the basis of kinship and, as generations pass, families on different branches of the tree grow into distinct sub-tribes.
- Not governed through standing formal institutions, but ad hoc councils of heads of families and other leaders.

**309** According to this definition, most Afghans are not tribal. Of Afghanistan's main ethnic groups, the Pashtuns are the only ones which are structured tribally and, of these, most urban Pashtuns have long ceased organising themselves in a tribal manner. Rural Pashtuns, on the other hand, remain deeply rooted in several tribal customs and institutions – many of which have been practiced for centuries. Ranging from codes of honour and responsibility to institutions governing village life, these customs make the Pashtuns a conservative, traditional society.

**310** **Family Life.** The family is the mainstay of Pashtun tribal society. Extremely close bonds exist within the family, which consists of several generations. Honour, pride, and respect toward other family members are important, especially toward the oldest man, or patriarch, who usually heads the family unit. Each family generally occupies either one mud-brick house or a walled compound containing mud-brick or stonewalled houses. Extended families tend to be co-located, although it is becoming more common in larger towns for families to be more dispersed. Traditional marriage preferences are with paternal cousins (father's brother's sons or daughters), although other forms of marriage are becoming more widespread. Gender roles are strictly defined, with men representing the 'public face' of the household in its dealings with the outside world, while women are largely confined to the domestic environment, being influential in the upbringing of children and the determination of marriage partners.

**311** **Village Life.** Traditionally, each village has four sources of authority, the:

- **Malik** – village headman.
- **Mirab** – master of water distribution.
- **Mullah (or Imam)** – mosque leader and teacher of Islamic law.
- **Khan** – wealthy landowner.

**312** In smaller, more isolated, villages the Khan will control the whole village by also assuming the role of both Malik and Mirab.

**313** Men work in the fields, joined by the women during the harvest. Older children tend the flocks and look after the smaller children. The village mosque is the centre of religious life and is often used as the village guest house. Almost all decisions are made at *jirga*: a gathering of the village's elders and influential personalities. Interaction between Coalition Forces and key leaders often takes place at these informal gatherings and their importance cannot be underestimated. Decisions made here will be binding and engagement with village *jirgas*

is an opportunity to demonstrate both GIRoA's and ISAF's commitment to the district.

### **PASHTUNWALI:**

#### ***The Way Of The Pashtun***

Pashtunwali is a complex mix of unwritten codes, customs and informal institutions which Pashtuns have lived by for centuries. Many of the principal elements of Pashtunwali predate Islam and have few roots in either Arab culture or Sharia Law. The average Pashtun looks more to Pashtunwali than Sharia as a guide for behaviour. Among the more important elements of Pashtunwali are:

#### **Hospitality (Melmastia)**

Pashtuns consider this one of their finest virtues. A Pashtun does not discriminate on grounds of ethnicity, religion, social status or qawm in respect to Melmastia and hospitality is given free from reciprocal obligations.

#### **Shelter (Nanawati)**

Nanawati involves the right to shelter or asylum. It can also be used as a form of forgiveness when a defeated party is prepared to go in to the house of his enemy and ask for *nanawati*. Nanawati may involve guarantees of safe passage through the use of armed escorts (*badragha*).

#### **Justice (Badal)**

It is considered honourable to respond to slights with reciprocation ('eye for an eye'). This can sometimes get out of control, spawning vicious blood feuds which last several generations and result in substantial loss of life on both sides. Failure to take revenge is seen as shameful. However, *nanawati* and punishments levied by jirga, such as *saz* (compensation) can absolve an aggrieved person from the obligation of taking *badal*.

The cessation of a blood feud is known as *teega*.

#### **Bravery (Tureh)**

Pashtuns are capable of acts of extreme bravery against vastly superior forces. Conducting a surprise, hit and run-attack against a superior force, and other similar acts of bravado, brings honour to the fighter and his tribe.

#### **Tribal Decision Making (Jirga)**

A jirga is an assembly of elders. Jirgas are used for taking collective decisions and resolving disputes. Typically a jirga will only be convened in response to an immediate need and its composition will be based on the availability of key leaders. At village level this is usually the head of each family.

Whereas a jirga is a pre-Islamic Pashtun institution, the shura (Arabic for 'consultation') is intimately connected to Islam and Arab culture. Shuras were introduced to Afghanistan with the rise of Arab influence during the mujahideen years are often associated with religious decision making.

#### **Tribal Policing (Arbakai)**

Decisions taken at jirga are enforced by an informal tribal police system, known as *arbakai*. The *arbakai* are highly protected within village life and if any inflicts harm on them, they will be severely punished. Strong *arbakai* institutions are limited to the more homogenous tribal areas in RC(E) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas on the Pakistani side of the Durand Line.

**314 Tribal Conflict.** Pashtun tribal organisation gives rise to three enduring conflict situations:

- Durrani-Ghilzai animosity.
- Panjpai dispossession.
- First cousin hostility.

**315 Durrani-Ghilzai Animosity.** The two main tribal confederations – the Durrani and the Ghilzai have a long history of animosity dating back to the formation of the Afghan State. Whilst the Ghilzai Hotaki tribe, under Mir Wais Hotak, initially drove the Persians out of Afghanistan in 1708, within a few decades the Durrani (with Persian support) had defeated the Ghilzai at Kandahar and established the modern State of Afghanistan. Since then the Durrani have provided all of Afghanistan's kings until the overthrow of the last monarch in 1973.

#### BACK TO THE FUTURE:

##### *Hotaki-Popalzai Rivalry*

Durrani-Ghilzai animosity finds its origins in the defeat of the Hotaki dynasty at the hands of the Persians, supported by more than 4000 Durrani fighters. The protagonists in this drama were a Ghilzai from the Hotaki tribe (Mir Wais Hotak) and a Durrani from the Popalzai tribe (Ahmad Shah Abdali). Echoes of this historical rivalry are to be found today with the replacement of Mullah Muhammad Omar (a Hotaki Ghilzai) with Hamid Karzai (a Popalzai Durrani).

**316 Panjpai Dispossession.** Within the Durrani confederation, there are two dominant sub-confederations – the Zirk and the Panjpai. The Zirk consist of the large, stable, tribes such as the Barakzai, Achakzai and Popalzai. These tribes have provided all of Afghanistan's leaders since the inception of the Afghan State in 1747 and have dominated the more productive arable lands south of the Hindu Kush. The smaller, weaker tribes

of the Panjpai confederation, on the other hand, have been restricted to the less fertile territories awarded them by Ahmad Shad Adbadi following the defeat of the Ghilzai.

**317** During their rise and subsequent years in power, the Taliban struggled to attract broad-based support from the Zirk Durrani who have long favoured the more traditional governance arrangements of the Old Regime. In response, the Taliban tended to rely on Panjpai support in the south, establishing the once marginalised sub-confederation as preferred clients. During the years 1996-2001, Panjpai tribal leaders ran many of the senior Taliban posts in Farah, Helmand, Uruzgan and Kandahar, in addition to dominating the much more important opium trade. However, since 2001 power and wealth in the south has reverted to historic norms as Zirk tribes have sought to dispossess the Panjpai of their recently acquired lands, titles and drug networks. Panjpai-Zirk conflict over control of drug revenues, government posts, farming land and water has been the source of considerable violence and instability in RC(S) and RC(SW) in the years following the defeat of the Taliban.

**318 First Cousin Hostility (*Tabarwali*).** First cousin hostility is a defining feature of Pashtun society. Hostility generally arises as a result of disputes over the inheritance of land from a common ancestor. Given that suitable arable land is limited, conflict over inheritance is fierce. Complicating matters, Islam allows multiple wives which results in numerous sons and cousins desiring an inheritance from a single patriarch. In addition, cousins tend to inherit adjacent allotments and, in the absence of any surveying system, boundary disputes are common. In this, almost unique, cultural situation, rural Pashtuns rarely trust (and often violently clash with) their closest kinsmen, all of whom have an equal ambition to possess as much of their shared grandfather's land as possible.

**319** Local conflicts such as these are the ones that rural Pashtuns are most heavily involved in (as opposed to conflicts with the Government or ISAF).

Where conflict leads to violence, the requirement for revenge (badal) serves to deepen animosities between opposing sides as each revenge attack brings with it the cultural requirement for additional badal leading to potentially endless blood feuds.

*The Pashtu word for 'cousin' is tarbar, which is also one of the words for 'enemy'.*

### LOCAL CONFLICTS

Only about 20% of local conflict occurs between tribes. The vast majority takes place within the tribe, most being within or between families. Land, water and debt are the most frequent drivers of local conflict.

Significantly, the Taliban have become adept at using local conflict to cement their position within rural communities. Travelling Taliban judges provide quick, predictable justice thereby resolving disputes and saving communities from the potentially disastrous effects of *badal*-driven blood feuds. Alternatively, the Taliban may become a party to the conflict, providing weapons or fighters in support of one of the protagonists. This, in turn, forces the opposite side to seek support with ISAF or GIRoA forces as entire families, clans and sub-tribes become politicised.

**320 Tribal Integrity.** Though tribe is a factor in Pashtun society, other forms of social influence are routinely more important than tribe. Chief of these is the 'patronage network', which has been the preferred rural engagement strategy of Afghan state-builders since Ahmed Shah Abdali first forged the Afghan State. Since then Afghanistan's tribes have been split, manipulated and forced into internal migrations that has left them both fragmented and scattered. The process began when Ahmed Shah ordered the large Barazkai tribe to split, creating a new Durrani tribe – the

Achakzai. Later, Abdur Rahman ordered mass internal migrations that dispersed tribesmen into scattered enclaves with little military or political power. More recently, the past 30 years of war have seen the rise of mujahideen commanders, warlords and opium barons. These local powerbrokers formed followings based not on family or clan but on a system of patronage made possible only by the huge influx of external resources from the Anti-Soviet alliance in the 1980's, the opium trade in the 1990's and ISAF in the present day.

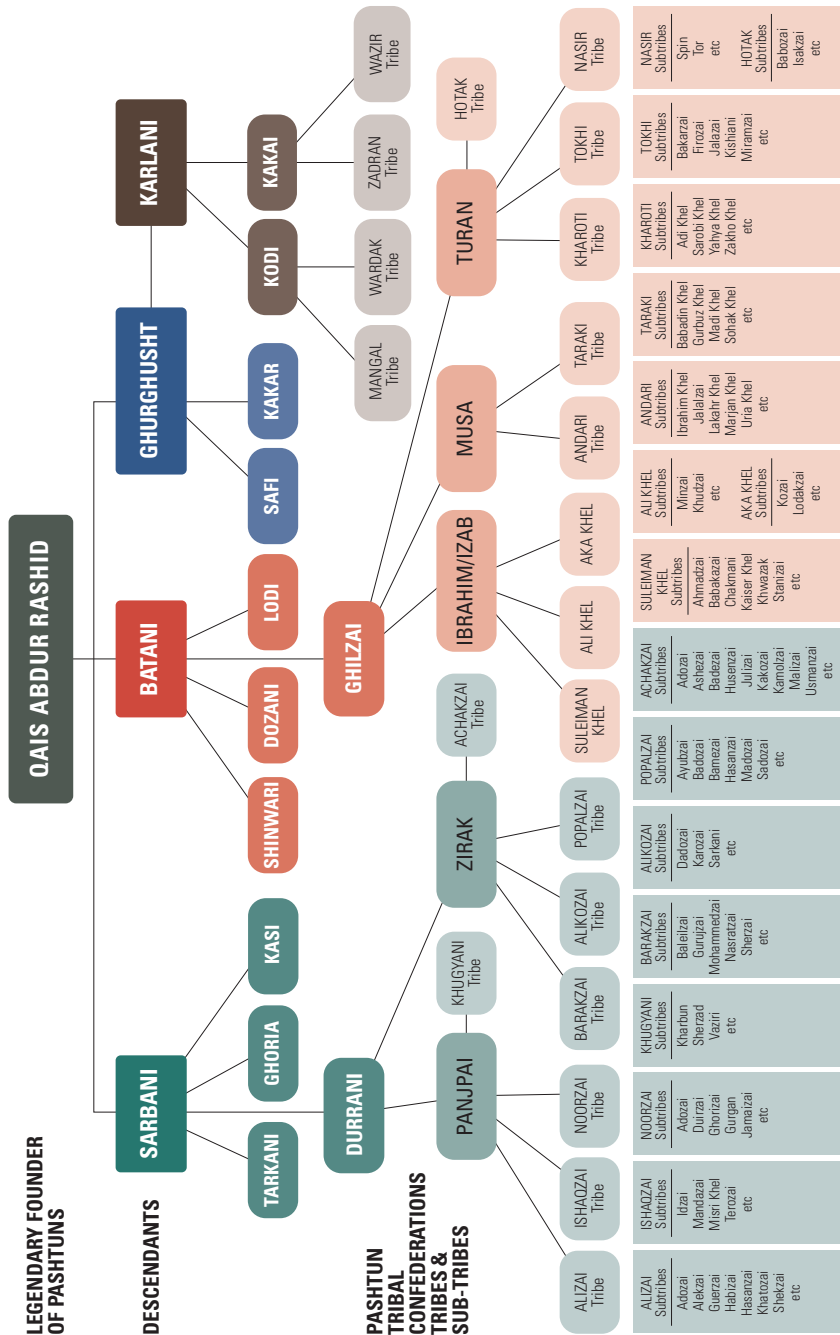
### AFGHAN CUSTOMS & CULTURE

**321 Greetings.** A smile, a nod, and a word of greeting are appropriate ways of greeting any Afghan. The usual form of verbal greeting is Salaam alay-kum ("peace be upon you"), which elicits the response Alay-kum salaam ("and upon you peace").

**322** Afghans of the same sex hug and kiss each other on the cheek as a sign of affection. Hugging generally demonstrates concern and sympathy toward the other person. It is common to see Afghan men walking hand in hand; this is simply an act of friendship.

**323 Handshake.** This is customary in Afghanistan when arriving and leaving. Handshakes between men are soft and gentle, not a test of strength. Afghans may place their right hands over their hearts after shaking hands. This gesture simply means that the handshake is from the heart. It is appropriate and expected that the receiver reciprocate. Whatever the situation, one should never attempt to initiate a handshake with a woman.

**324 Eye Contact.** Breaking eye contact is not seen as impolite or indicative of dishonesty. Rather, it is a function of modesty. Afghans consider the act of looking someone straight in the eye as a sign of aggression. Members of the opposite sex do not look each other in the eye and male foreigners should avoid making eye contact with Afghan women, since it will give serious offense.



**USEFUL PHRASES: DARI & PASHTO****GOOD MORNING**

Dari: Sob Bakhayr

Pashto: Sahar Mo Pehayr

**GOOD EVENING**

Dari: Shab Bakhayr

Pashto: Spamo Pehayr

**HOW ARE YOU?**

Dari: Hubasti

Pashto: Cenga Yi?

**FINE, VERY WELL**

Dari: Khoob Hastem

Pashto: Sama

**HELLO**

Dari: Salām

Pashto: Salām

**GOODBYE**

Dari: Khoda Hafeez

Pashto: Khoday pa Amaan

**THANKYOU**

Dari: Tashakur

Pashto: Manana

**PLEASE**

Dari: Lotfan

Pashto: Lotfan

**MY NAME IS**

Dari: Naam E Man

Pashto: Zmā Num

**I'M FROM AUSTRALIA**

Dari: Ma Az Australia Astum

Pashto: Ze Australi Yayi Yum

**YES**

Dari: Baley

Pashto: Ho

**NO**

Dari: Nay

Pashto: Na

**325 Personal Space.** Afghans typically stand closer to other people during conversation than Australians. When observing a foreigner in conversation with an Afghan, it is common to see the foreigner move away as the Afghan inches closer. This continual shifting may go unnoticed by the individuals, but can still lead to each feeling uncomfortable with the encounter.

**326 Photographs.** It is considered extremely rude to photograph someone without first asking their permission. Cultural norms also prohibit the photographing of women in Afghanistan.

**TIPS FOR ENGAGING LOCALS****DO**

Shake hands firmly but gently in greeting and departure. Always use the right hand.

Remove footwear before entering a home or mosque. Shoes are regarded as defiling.

Afghans usually sit on the floor in their own homes. Cross your legs rather than stretch them out as pointing your feet towards someone else may cause offense.

Stand up when someone enters a room.

Try all food offered. This acknowledges the hospitality of the host. Items may have been difficult to acquire and regardless of their wealth/ status, the offering allows the host to maintain honour.

Use applicable professional or academic titles (i.e. Engineer, Doctor, and Professor etc). This confers honour on the individual, his family and qawm.

Expect to spend much of the visit socialising and drinking tea before discussing business. Afghans have a different sense of time and punctuality. Focus more on building trusted relationships than delivering messages.

Give a gift in return for one received, Gifts acknowledge or initiate relationships.

**DON'T**

Use the left hand for physical contact with others, to eat or to gesture: it is considered unclean.

Sit with the soles of your feet facing someone. It indicates that you believe the person is beneath you.

Show a woman attention by addressing, touching, or staring at her.

Ask men direct questions about their female relatives.

Walk away from someone who is speaking to you.

Tell someone he is wrong if he gives incorrect information. It is considered a slight.

Expect Afghans to be able to read, especially in rural areas.

Beckon or point with a finger. It is considered rude and may be mistaken for a challenge.

Wear sunglasses when speaking to an Afghan.

Offer food or drink during Ramazan.



*Time spent sharing tea with locals is always time well spent. Photo: Source unknown.*

## RELIGION

**327** Religion is an important part of daily life for most Afghans, regardless of their ethnicity or tribe. The overwhelming majority of Afghans (around 99%) are Muslims. Of these 84% are Sunnis and 15% Shi'a (mostly Hazara and Herati-Tajiks).

**328** The word Islam means "submission" [to God]. Like Christianity and Judaism, Islam is a monotheistic religion. Muslims recognise parts of the Bible (the Torah, Pentateuch and Gospel) and

believe that Jesus was a great prophet of the faith. However, they hold that the final and culminating revelations were made to Muhammad, the last and greatest of the prophets. The Qur'an is considered to be the verbatim word of God as revealed to Muhammad through the Archangel Gabriel.

**329** Muslims also believe in a day of judgement (*Qiyamah*) and the bodily resurrection of the dead. Much like the New Testament, the Qur'an describes the last days preceding *Qiyamah* as encompassing various trials and tribulations.

### Sunnis and Shi'a

**330** Sunni and Shi'a are the two main branches within Islam. The division occurred as a result of a succession debate following the death of Muhammad. Some believed that leadership of the Muslim Ummah (faithful) should be based on merit as determined by a shura (council of elders). Others thought that it should be vested in Muhammad's lineage through his son-in-law Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Those who believed that Ali was the rightful successor to Muhammad and that future Imams should descend from this line were called *Shi'a-t-Ali* (Party of Ali), or simply Shi'a.

**331** **Sunni.** Sunnis possess no clerical hierarchy or centralised institutions. Whilst Imams and Mullahs are important figures in religious life, Sunnis approach God directly without the need for a central hierarchy. The absence of a central hierarchy has been a source of strength that has permitted Sunnis to adapt to local conditions all over the world. However, it has also made it difficult for Sunnis to achieve consensus and, as such, the branch has split into at least four schools of Islamic jurisprudence (of which Hanafi predominates in Afghanistan) and supported a host of fundamentalist and revivalist movements. Significant Sunni States include Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Indonesia. With the notable exception of the Hazara most of Afghanistan's main ethnic groups practice the Sunni faith.

**332** **Shi'a.** In the Shi'a community, Imams act as intermediaries between worshippers and



Allah and are all descendent from Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Although not divine, Imams are vested with significant religious authority and are considered infallible on matters of faith and morals. Iran, a Shi'a theocracy, has established itself as the champion of Shi'ites worldwide. Similarly, post-Ba'athist Iraq is an emerging Shi'a State and may in time challenge Iran's hegemony over the global Shi'a movement. Within Afghanistan the Shi'a faith is represented by the Hazara and pilgrims are attracted to Mazar-e-Sharif's Blue Mosque (Hazrat Ali) which is believed to be the final resting place of Ali after he was exhumed from his initial burial site in Najaf, Iraq.



*Hazrat Ali Shrine, Mazar-e-Sharif.*

### The Five Pillars of Islam

**333** A (Sunni) Muslim's duties form the five pillars of the faith (Shi'ites have a similar set of practices):

- **Shahadat.** Literally 'testimony' or 'witness', is the central creed of Islam: "There is no god but God (Allah), and Mohammed is His Prophet". This profession of faith is repeated often, and its sincere recital designates one as a Muslim.
- **Salāt.** Ritual prayer is conducted five times a day. Muslims pray in a prescribed manner after purification through ritual ablutions at dawn, midday, mid afternoon, sunset, and nightfall. Worshippers recite the prayers while facing Mecca and where possible congregate in a mosque under a prayer leader (*imam*).

- **Sawm** entails a period of obligatory fasting during daylight hours in the ninth month (Ramazan) of the Muslim (lunar) calendar. Muslims are forbidden to eat, drink, smoke, or have sex from sunrise to sunset during this time.
- **Zakat** is the act of giving alms to the poor. In the early days of Islam, governing authorities imposed Zakat as a tax on personal property. Now, Zakat may be collected at mosques or by government for distribution to the poor. It is considered a religious obligation (as opposed to voluntary charity).
- **Haji.** Once in their lifetimes, Muslims are required, if physically and financially able, to make a pilgrimage, or Hajj, to the holy city of Mecca during the 12th month of the lunar calendar. Due to the extreme poverty within Afghanistan few people have undertaken the Hajj and those who have sometimes change their name or title to Haji in recognition of their pilgrimage.

### Shari'a

**334** Muslims view Shari'a as God's law constituting his blueprint for life. The authority of Shari'a is drawn from two primary and two secondary sources. The primary sources are specific guidance laid down in the Qur'an and the sayings and example of the Prophet Muhammad. The secondary sources are consensus (*Ijma*) and extension of existing Shari'a to new situations by analogy (*Qiyas*).

**335** All Muslims believe in Shari'a, but they differ as to exactly what it entails, with modernists, traditionalists and fundamentalists all holding different views. Different interpretations of Shari'a are often the cause of conflict between Muslim communities. Here, the role of ulema (i.e. scholars) is critical for resolving disputes and interpreting the law.

**336** Shari'a has only emerged as a political force in Afghan society in recent decades, largely due to exposure to Arab influences during the Soviet occupation. Pashtuns, in particular, look more to Pashtunwali than Shari'a as a guide to behaviour.

## JIHAD

Sometimes referred to as the 'sixth pillar of Islam', jihad is an important religious duty for all Muslims. The term is best translated as "struggle" and is typically used to refer to struggles in defence of the faith. This could be an internal struggle to improve the faithful (Ummah) or an external struggle to defend the faithful from the non-faithful (infidel).

A person engaged in jihad is known as a *mujahid*, the plural is *mujahideen*.

The concept of jihad has been co-opted by violent extremist groups in recent decades and used to justify a state of permanent armed conflict against Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Notwithstanding this, the vast majority of Muslims practice jihad as a peaceful struggle to maintain personal faith. In Pashtun society, jihad can be a struggle for honour as well as faith.

## Scholars, Teachers & Students

**337 Ulema.** Ulems are Muslim legal scholars and the arbiters of shari'a law. In Afghanistan, the ulema are influential in both the formal and informal justice system. The Head of the Ulema Council of Afghanistan, Fazl Hadi Shinwari, was also the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from 2001 to 2006. During his tenure as Chief Justice, Shinwari reinstated the hated ex-Taliban *Ministry For The Promotion Of Virtue And Prevention Of Vice* and was widely seen as sympathetic to the Salafi-influenced views of Abdul Rasul Sayyaf.

**338 Mullah.** An important figure in Afghan village life is the mullah. Whilst generally less educated than the ulema, mullahs fulfil a range of

roles at the local level, including that of teacher, sheik (elder), marriage celebrant, undertaker and imam (prayer leader). Mullahs deliver the Friday sermon at the mosque, arbitrate local disputes and provide advice on social and personal problems. However the mullah may not necessarily understand either the words or their meaning, since the book is written in Arabic. The leader of the Taliban movement, Mullah Muhammad Omar was a village mullah near Kandahar prior to establishing the Taliban.

**339 Madrassa.** After the 9/11 attacks on the United States, American television commentators, and analysts worldwide, began associating madrassas with terrorism. This association is only partly correct. Most madrassas are simply schools providing religious education to boys (and sometimes girls) that would probably not get any education otherwise. Some madrassas, however, are associated with providing fighters - especially the madrassas established by the Zia military dictatorship during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. These schools were financed by the Pakistanis in order to train a generation of young Pashtuns in the precepts of an increasingly radicalised form of Deobandism and prepare them for jihad in Afghanistan. With the rise of the Taliban some of these madrassas became associated with Arab organisations such as Al Qaeda.

**340** A 2008 estimate suggests that there are about 40,000 madrassas in Afghanistan. Tanzeem-ul-Madaris (Berailvi school of thought) represents the greatest number, followed by Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia (Deobandi school of thought). The three remaining schools are Wafaqul Madaris Al-Shia (Shia school of thought), Rabita-ul-Madaris Al-Islamia (Jamiate-i-Islami school of thought founded by Syed Maudoodi) and Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Salfia (Ahl-e Hadith school of thought).

**341 Taleb.** A taleb is a student. Typically someone studying at a religious school (madrassa). The plural is Taliban (literally, 'students'). Mullah Omar's Taliban movement is so named to reflect its roots within the refugee camps in Pakistan and madrassas on both sides of the border during the Afghan Civil War.

## Chapter 4 – Insurgency

- Origins & Evolution
- Structure of the Insurgency
- Pakistani Extremist Groups
- Taliban Strategy
- Enablers & Vulnerabilities
- State of the Insurgency in 2014

**401** Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan has become an arena for factional, criminal, ethnic, local and regional conflicts. Criminal groups involved in illicit opium, timber, minerals and gem trading have flourished. Ethnic and factional rivalry over control of valuable government posts within the ministries of Defence, Interior, Justice and Finance has spilled into the wider community resulting in instability and violence. Local conflicts have festered as a result of the failure of the state to institute a viable judicial system. Most of these have taken the form of conflict over scarce resources such as land and water, and have been exacerbated by the return of millions of refugees to the villages, homes and farms they abandoned decades previously. Old mujahideen commanders have returned to raise private militias and re-assert control over their traditional territories and new power-brokers have entered the scene, flushed with newly found wealth from lucrative security contracts with international forces.

**402** However, whilst these processes have contributed to widespread violence and instability, the insurgency remains the greatest challenge facing the Afghan government.

### ORIGINS & EVOLUTION OF THE INSURGENCY

#### The Retreat to Pakistan

**403** Following their defeat, senior Taliban leaders and as many as 10,000 fighters escaped

into neighbouring Pakistan, back to the refugee camps and madrassas from where the movement first arose. Rather than detain them, Pakistani authorities provided refuge within the large sprawling suburb of Pashtunabad on the outskirts of Quetta. From here the Taliban were able to rely on well-established relationships with Pakistan-based extremist organisations and religious parties, in particular *Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Islami*, and began to plan the re-infiltration of Afghanistan. For the next five years not a single Taliban commander would be handed over to ISAF forces by the Pakistanis.



AF-PAK border region.

**404** Further north, several hundred foreign fighters (Arabs, Uzbeks, Chechens, Pakistanis, etc) escorted by Ghilzai, Kakar and Zadran guides escaped across the border into Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), with Osama bin Laden, reportedly amongst them. Many took refuge with Jalaluddin Haqqani near Miranshah in North Waziristan. Despite occasional Pakistani military operations, the FATA provided an ideal sanctuary from where they were able to regroup, recruit, raise funds, re-arm, establish new training camps and plan, support and foster successful mass casualty attacks in Madrid, London and within Pakistan itself.

**405** Around the same time Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who had openly pledged to cooperate with the Taliban in order to resist the US occupation, was expelled from Iran. Hekmatyar immediately began reactivating old *Hezb-i-Islami Gulbuddin* (HIG) networks and sought refuge in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP, later Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (KPK)).

### The Collapse of Governance

**406.** Rather than turning to the onerous task of rebuilding the Afghan state and restoring security in the countryside, US forces under 'Operation Enduring Freedom' maintained a light footprint and were tasked with tracking down al Qaeda remnants in the Pakistani border regions. The responsibility for securing Kabul fell to a newly established, UN-mandated, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), initially composed of only 5,000 troops who were unable to patrol outside of the city.

#### FORCE RATIOS

The deployment of coalition forces in order to provide security and stability in post-conflict Afghanistan represented the lowest per capita commitment of military personnel to any post-conflict environment since the formation of the UN.

Extant US Army counterinsurgency guidance in *FM 3-24* states that 1:50 (counterinsurgents to local population)

is often considered the minimum force density required for effective operations.

Recent post-conflict stabilisation operations such as Bosnia (1:48) and Kosovo (1:58) were afforded far more troops per population than that supplied to Afghanistan (1:2000).

**407** The newly installed interim Government lacked the capacity to establish its authority in the provinces and was unable to provide essential services to the rural population. As a consequence, security outside of Kabul deteriorated markedly as opportunistic groups engaged in extortion, intimidation, crop seizures, land theft and targeted killings.

### The Return of the Warlords

**408** The failure to commit sufficient troop numbers for the purposes of stabilising the situation in the countryside, and the focus of US Special Forces on hunting al Qaeda in the border regions, created a power vacuum in the provinces. As a consequence, old civil war commanders such as Dostum, Khalili, Mohaqiq, Fahim, Atta and Ismael Khan began to reappear in the north, centre and west of the country. The Pashtun belt in the south and east was left largely ungoverned resulting in a cocktail of minor warlords, opium barons, former Taliban commanders and criminal opportunists emerging to fill the vacuum and fight one another over control of tolls, drugs and weapons caches.

**409** With a new warlord State being established, Karzai and the interim government could not compete. The light footprint strategy left Karzai weak, impoverished and irrelevant in Kabul whilst the warlords ran the remainder of the country. To be sure, several senior US administrators and legislators recognised the danger, including US Ambassador to Afghanistan, Ryan Crocker, and Senator (now Vice President) Joseph Biden who warned:

*"America has replaced the Taliban with warlords. Warlords are still on the US payroll but that hasn't bought a cessation of violence. Not only is the US failing to reign in the warlords, we are actually making them the centrepiece of our strategy".*



Structure of Insurgency.

### Resentment to Occupation

**410** Against all predictions that the invasion would provoke a nation-wide insurgency, international forces were welcomed by most Afghans in the years following the fall of the Taliban. After decades of war, the population was looking for stability and saw in the occupation a chance to recover from the 30 years of conflict which had so devastated the country. During these early years optimism remained high and several million refugees returned home. In fact, the major criticism of occupation forces during the first few years was that there were not enough of them.

**411** However, by 2005 the goodwill and enthusiasm that Afghans displayed at the expulsion of the Taliban, the convening of the Constitutional Loya Jirga and the 2004 Presidential elections was beginning to subside. Complaints of insecurity, government misconduct and widespread corruption began to rise. This coincided with a growing dissatisfaction with the pace of the country's reconstruction and economic development, in which few improvements ever reached the countryside. Widespread suspicion that the urban elite had been the prime beneficiaries of international aid began to fuel jealousy and resentment against Kabulis and the re-emergence of centuries old centre-periphery antagonisms.

**412** More ominously, locals started to turn against international forces that were in danger of transitioning from guest (mehman) to enemy (dushman). Criticisms were leveled at the isolation of internationals, who rarely spoke a local language and enjoyed a lifestyle in international compounds in stark contrast to that of the local population. Civilian casualties (CIVCAS) through collateral damage and rumours of torture at Bagram Air Base further fuelled the resentment. At times, international forces accelerated the process through culturally inappropriate, unnecessarily invasive, and overly violent house raids.

### The Rise of the Taliban Phoenix

**413** The insurgency against the new domestic order being established in Afghanistan began in early 2003. Taking advantage of the diversion of US attention and resources to the invasion of Iraq, the Taliban set themselves up as a government in exile (the so-called Quetta Shura) and began to re-infiltrate the countryside.

**414** Initial infiltration was restricted to those areas contiguous with Pakistani Baluchistan – notably Zabul, Kandahar and Helmand. As a consequence, by the end of 2003 the Taliban had managed to establish themselves in dozens of rural villages in the south, using a mixture of persuasion and coercion. Around the same time, the eastern provinces began to experience a sharp increase in cross-border raids led by Zadran tribal fighters loyal to Jalaluddin Haqqani and various foreign groups, including al Qaeda.

**415** As the insurgency spread, the newly established Afghan National Police (ANP) took the bulk of the casualties, losing more men than the Afghan National Army (ANA) and coalition forces combined. Subsequently, NGO's and major international development organisations began to withdraw from the more remote areas, further isolating the rural population from the reconstruction and development effort.

**416** As a consequence, when UK and Canadian troops deployed to Helmand and Kandahar as part of ISAF's expansion in 2006, they confronted a well-armed insurgency led by a reinvigorated Taliban senior leadership over the border in Quetta. During that year alone suicide bombings increased by 400% (from 27 to 139), the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) more than doubled (from 783 to 1677) and armed attacks nearly tripled (from 1558 to 4542).

**417** From 2006 the insurgency grew in both virulence and reach. In both the south and east of the country insurgents managed to build trans-tribal groups of fighters capable of significantly disrupting belated international efforts to establish security

in the countryside. More importantly, they were successful in killing or intimidating local leaders and government officials who opposed them, and set themselves up as an alternative provider of security and justice. In the major urban centres of Kandahar and Ghazni they established a permanent presence and engaged in consolidating their support networks, collecting intelligence on the local population and assassinating key opponents.

**418** The Taliban later infiltrated provinces north of the Hindu Kush, establishing new support networks, conducting guerrilla attacks and avoiding concentration of forces in what amounted to a classic Maoist strategy. New networks were established amongst Pashtun settlements in Kunduz, Balkh, Baghlan and Badghis in particular.

**419** Finally, Taliban and Haqqani fighters were successful in destabilising the provinces around Kabul, particularly Wardak and Logar as they sought bases from which to launch attacks on the capital. Indeed, from 2009 Haqqani fighters began infiltrating Kabul City and were responsible for numerous high profile attacks.

## STRUCTURE OF THE INSURGENCY

**420** The Afghan insurgency is largely indigenous and decentralized. Comprising of a syndicate of three largely autonomous groups: the Quetta Shura Taliban (known simply as the Taliban), Haqqani Network (HQN) and Hizb-i-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG), it relies on significant external support from Pakistan. The insurgency also features a range of smaller militant organisations including the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Herat Insurgency Faction (HIF) all of whom share a common vision of Afghanistan as an Islamic emirate, owe symbolic allegiance to Mullah Omar and, to a limited extent, are united under the senior Taliban shura reportedly based in Quetta.

**421** From their safe havens in Pakistan, senior insurgent leaders are able to provide strategic guidance to lower echelon commanders in Afghanistan and channel resources to support operational priorities. The insurgent structure

at the provincial level generally consists of two man teams of a shadow governor and a military commander. These individuals often reside in Pakistan, crossing the border to plan major attacks, adjudicate over disputes and motivate local fighters. In recent years, however, senior insurgent leaders have displayed a reluctance to cross into Afghanistan, or remain only for short periods, unwilling to be exposed to coalition targeting prior to the 2014 departure of most international forces.

## Insurgency by Region

**422 South.** Southern Afghanistan is the main insurgent centre of gravity due the tribal, familial and historical ties a number of key Taliban leaders maintain with the area (six of the ten most violent districts in the country are in Helmand Province alone). The main insurgent focus is on maintaining facilitation lines in Zharay, Maiwand and Panjwai Districts into Kandahar City, whilst attempting to regain lost vital ground and establish freedom of movement. Zabul remains a significant insurgent facilitation zone and Helmand, in addition to being the most violent province in the country, fills Taliban coffers annually as a result of taxes levied against the lucrative opium industry. High profile attacks are a persistent threat in the lead-up to Afghanistan's April 2014 presidential and provincial council elections. That said, overall enemy initiated attacks have been reducing since 2012.

### QUETTA SHURA TALIBAN

#### Background

The Taliban arose from within the refugee camps in Pakistan and madrassas on both sides of the border during the Soviet occupation and subsequent Afghan Civil War. They came to power at the end of the Civil War by articulating popular disillusionment with the factionalism, criminality and personal ambitions of the mujahideen leaders and promising to restore peace, justice, honesty and a return to fundamental Islamic values. The Taliban represent a genuinely pan-



tribal movement. Support is generated by tailoring messages to different target audiences, emphasising jihad and sharia within the radicalised madrassas and refugee camps of Pakistan; Ghilzai tribal loyalty and ambitions within Afghanistan's eastern provinces and social disadvantage and marginalisation in the Durrani belt in the south. In all areas, the Taliban have proven adept at using local disputes and anti-occupation sentiment to their advantage.

### Area of Activity

The Taliban senior leadership enjoy sanctuary in Pakistani Baluchistan (and most probably Punjab and Sindh), from where they provide strategic direction for the insurgency in Afghanistan. They have successfully infiltrated a large proportion of Afghanistan's southern provinces and are also active north of the Hindu Kush. In recent years the Taliban leadership have sought Haqqani Network assistance in conducting high profile attacks in Kabul, but are concerned at being supplanted by the latter group as Pakistan's 'favoured child' over the longer term.

### Aim

The Taliban aim to regain power in Kabul from where they can re-establish the Emirate and introduce their interpretation of Sharia law. They have eschewed the political process, rejected the Afghan constitution, ignored the April 2014 elections, and await the coalition's departure.



*Taliban Supreme Leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar.*

**423 East.** Eastern Afghanistan is a volatile area that contains the full range of Afghan insurgent groups, most of whom are supported by Pakistan-based militias. The area is transected by major insurgent facilitation routes (many insurgents simply enter through Torkham and utilise Highway 1) from adjacent sanctuaries in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The provinces leading to Kabul are staging areas for high profile attacks in the city, the majority of which are attributed to the Haqqani network. Al-Qaeda remnants and Pakistan-focused militias exploit ungoverned spaces in northeastern Afghanistan for sanctuary and enemy initiated attacks are on the rise.

## HEZB-I-ISLAMI GULBUDDIN

### Background

HIG is the oldest of the three main insurgent groups. Formed in 1976, HIG was a recipient of vast amounts of US and Saudi aid during the 1980s. HIG forces clashed with, and were subsequently defeated by, the Taliban during the latter's rise to power. Hekmatyar fled to Iran and only returned from exile in 2002 in order to support

the resistance against US occupation. As a result of its reliance on external funding, HIG is less deeply rooted in local communities and enjoys less popular support than other insurgent groups. HIG appeals mainly to an anti-occupation narrative.

### Area of Activity

Traditionally based in the Shamshatoo refugee camp outside Peshawar, HIG's lines of infiltration have enabled them to establish control of isolated mountainous villages in Nuristan and Nangahar. In addition, Hekmatyar has been successful in mobilising support from kinship networks within his native Kunduz province.

### Aim

Hekmatyar's aim is to control the mineral and smuggling revenues in the north-eastern provinces as well as to negotiate a significant role for himself in a future Afghan government. To this end, Hekmatyar has played a double game, supporting the Taliban by targeting Afghan and NATO forces in the east, whilst making occasional overtures to the Karzai government for a power sharing arrangement. Despite their anti-Karzai rhetoric, a HIG offshoot (Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA)) have participated in the National Assembly elections and some members of the party have joined the Kabul government. The Taliban and al Qaeda are deeply antagonistic to HIG involvement in Afghan politics and have periodically replenished HIG coffers in return for their dissociation from reconciliation processes.



Founder & Leader of Hezb-i-Islami, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

**424 North.** Traditionally a pro-Government region, the drawdown of ISAF has seen insurgent numbers increase in places like Badakshan Province. That said, insurgent activity is still minor in comparison to the south and east and is typically focused on raids, assassinations and the emplacement of IEDs. Enemy initiated attacks in the region have been stable over the past two years.

**425 West.** Violence in western Afghanistan is a mixture of criminal and insurgent activity, with much of the west best described as "post-conflict" and only Farah Province retaining a string connection with the wider insurgency. The rise of enemy initiated attack in the west over the past year is attributed to insurgent displacement from neighbouring Helmand.

**426 Kabul.** The capital is the primary target for high profile attacks in an attempt to draw disproportionate media and political attention and generate a sense of insecurity. The Haqqani Network are the most active insurgent group in Kabul, despite the Taliban claiming credit for the bulk of insurgent activity.

*"The Taliban and other insurgent groups have deliberate social strategies that exacerbate the breakdown in Afghan social cohesion. They empower radical mullahs to replace local leaders ...consistently support weaker, disenfranchised or threatened tribes and groups. They erode traditional*

*social structures and capitalise on vast unemployment by empowering the young and disenfranchised through cash payments, weapons and prestige”.*

- Stanley A. McChrystal, former COMISAF

## HAQQANI NETWORK

### Background

Jalaluddin Haqqani rose to fame as a mujahideen fighter for the Khalis faction of Hezb-i-Islami during the Soviet occupation. Unlike Hekmatyar (whose reliance on ISI funding resulted in a failure to establish popular support at a local level) Haqqani's network of madrassas and fighters is deeply rooted in the Zadran and Wazir tribes on either side of the Durand Line. Although not a member of the Taliban, Haqqani nevertheless served as Minister of Tribal Affairs and Governor of Paktika province during the Taliban era and is thought to have provided refuge to Osama bin Laden following the latter's escape over the mountains of Tora Bora in 2001. Since the fall of the Taliban, the Haqqani have re-established a network of support structures in Pakistan's tribal areas from which they have raised a large number of committed fighters. The Haqqani Network (HQN) is estimated to have more than 10,000 fighters and is regarded by the coalition as an insurgent group with significant operational capability.

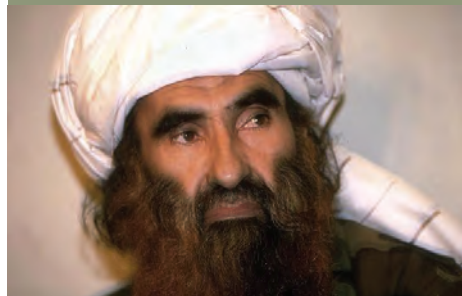
### Area of Activity

The Haqqani Network is centred in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), in particular Miranshah and Mir Ali within North Waziristan. Under the operational leadership of Jalaluddin's son, Sirajuddin, tribal fighters have been able to infiltrate into Afghanistan's eastern provinces and establish significant local support amongst the Zadran tribes of Paktia, Paktika and Khost (P2K). Today Haqqani activity extends well beyond its

traditional areas, including the Nangahar, Nuristan and Kunar (N2K) group of provinces and, significantly, districts of Logar and Wardak which they use as staging bases and infiltration routes to conduct high profile attacks in Kabul.

### Aim

The Haqqani Network are ideologically aligned with the Taliban. They seek to drive international forces from Afghanistan, re-establish the Emirate (and Shari'a law) in Kabul and regain full control of their traditional base in Afghanistan's eastern provinces. The Haqqanis have enjoyed significant support from Pakistan and, in turn, have been outspokenly critical of the TTP and other insurgents conducting attacks against the Pakistani state.



*Mawlawi Jalaluddin Haqqani, leader of the Haqqani Network.*

## Support for the Insurgency

**427** Despite the presence of a Pashtun ruler in Kabul and an attempt to generate proportional ethnic representation for important government posts, the insurgency has taken on a strong ethnic component. Support remains highest amongst rural Pashtun communities and networks of village mullahs in the south and east of Afghanistan as well as Pashtun communities in Pakistan. In contrast, support for the insurgency is negligible within Afghanistan's remaining ethnic groups. In the north, Uzbeks, Turkmen and Tajiks typically despise the Taliban. Popular support in the cities remains low,

even amongst Pashtuns, and support in the central Hazarajat is non-existent.

**428** Within the Pashtun belt, HIG and HQN tend to prosper in areas which retain a strong tribal identity. This includes remote or mountainous regions which by virtue of their geography have remained beyond the reach of the events which have destroyed tribal structures elsewhere in Afghanistan. It also includes districts on both sides of the Durand Line which have enjoyed special tribal administrative status.

**429** Support for the Taliban, on the other hand, predominates in more detribalised zones, such as the southern provinces of Helmand and Kandahar in Afghanistan and in Pakistan's Baluchistan province. Whilst Taliban ideology remains a powerful motivating factor in raising recruits from refugee communities in Pakistan, on the Afghan side of the border insurgents tend to fight because of local grievances and in response to perceptions of risk and opportunity.

### POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE INSURGENCY

Polls indicate that 63% of the overall population has no sympathy for armed opposition groups. Only 10% have a lot of sympathy for these groups, and 20% say they have some level of support.

*Source: Afghanistan in 2012: A Survey of the Afghan People (Asia Foundation, Washington D.C., 2012).*

### PAKISTANI EXTREMIST GROUPS

**430** Afghanistan is the rear area for many Pakistani extremist groups who conduct operations over the border in order to gain experience and recruit fighters for jihad in India and, for some groups, Pakistan itself. Many of these groups were established either directly by, or with the tacit consent of, the Pakistani government who sought proxies for their campaigns in Soviet-

occupied Afghanistan during the 1980s and Indian-administered Kashmir in the 1990s. In what amounts to a classic 'blowback' insurgency, the original objectives of these groups have now expanded to include Islamic revolution in Pakistan itself, particularly following the 2007 storming of the Red Mosque in Islamabad.

**431 Lashkar-e-Tayyba (LeT).** Trans. *Army of the Pure*. LeT is the militant wing of the Pakistani missionary organization Makaz-ad-Dawa-wal-Irshad (MDI). Formed in 1990, LeT was the first of many Pakistani groups to train at Taliban-controlled camps in Afghanistan, allegedly fighting alongside Taliban troops against Northern Alliance forces. Initially limited to operations in Kashmir, LeT have claimed responsibility for several major attacks in Indian urban centres in recent years, including the 2008 Mumbai attacks. Although officially banned, the Lahore-based group receives significant Pakistani support and continues to operate under the alias Jamaat ud-Dawa (JuD) with several training camps in Pakistan. With ties to al Qaeda, LeT's aims are to liberate Indian-administered Kashmir and introduce Shari'a to Pakistan. More recently, the LeT has provided trainers and other operatives to Afghanistan-focused militias targeting the coalition in southern and eastern Afghanistan.



2008 Mumbai Attack. Photo: Source unknown.

**432 Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ).** Trans. *Army of Jhangvi* after the Deobandi leader Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi. LeJ has established a reputation as one of the most violent extremist groups in Pakistan, claiming responsibility for a number of vicious attacks on Pakistan's minority Shia (including

Afghan Hazara) and Christian communities. LeJ has had a long relationship with the Pakistani state, receiving financial support (along with a number of other militant groups) in order to be used as an asymmetric weapon against India. Whilst sectarian attacks in Pakistan and operations against India remain LeJ's primary activity, the group has recently broadened its focus to target the US presence in Afghanistan. The Pakistani government began cracking down on LeJ in the wake of 9/11, following which LeJ formed an alliance with al Qaeda and the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and began to target Pakistan itself. The group's goals are to establish a Deobandi Sunni Islamic state in Pakistan through the expulsion or elimination of Pakistan's minority groups and the introduction of Shari'a.

**433 Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).** Trans. *The Army of Mohammed*. JeM operates primarily in Indian-administered Kashmir. However, recently JeM's focus has turned towards attacks against the government in Pakistan and coalition forces in Afghanistan. JeM operates several training camps in Pakistan and has been implicated in the 2005 London attacks and the attempted trans-Atlantic plane bombing. The group's aims are to unite Indian-administered Kashmir with Pakistan and establish Shari'a law.

**434 Jamiat ul-Ansar (JuA).** JuA was formed as Harakat ul-Mujahideen by the Pakistani government in order to act as a proxy for its wars in Afghanistan and Kashmir during the 1980s. The group is aligned with the Pakistani political party, Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam Fazul (JUI-F) and has cooperated with other extremist organisations operating in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. On 16 December 2006, leaders of JuA and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) called for a joint strategy and pledged to cooperate with Afghan insurgents to target coalition forces in Afghanistan. Since then JuA training camps in Pakistan have provided guerrilla training for Afghan insurgents and explosives training to Pakistani's living abroad for mass casualty attacks in the homelands of coalition countries.

**435 Tehrik Nifaz-e-Shariat Mohammadi (TNSM).** TNSM was established in the 1990s in the Malakand Division of Pakistan (a region which includes the Swat Valley). Due to its socialist leanings the group quickly enjoyed support among the working classes and began to push for a number of social and judicial reforms. Following the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, TNSM reportedly sent over 10,000 fighters over the border to aid the Taliban. In 2009 a TNSM operation captured the majority of the Swat Valley and initiated a major conflict with Pakistani security forces, the result of which was a truce and the implementation of Shari'a in the Swat.

**436 Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).** Trans. *Student Movement of Pakistan*. The Pakistani Taliban is an umbrella organisation of around 30 loosely affiliated militant student groups in Pakistan. Formed in 2007 in response to Pakistani military incursions into the tribal areas, the TTP have largely maintained a separate identity from their Afghan counterparts. Nevertheless, it has opportunistically targeted ISAF supply convoys in Pakistan. Under the leadership of Baitullah Mehsud (2007 – 2009) the TTP gained notoriety for a growing number of mass casualty attacks in Pakistan, including the assassination of Benazir Bhutto. In August 2009 Mehsud was himself killed by a US UAV strike. Under Hakimullah Mehsud (2009-2013), the TTP waged all out war against the Pakistan state, with elements later seeking shelter from Pakistani counter-offensives in Afghanistan's Kunar and Nuristan provinces. The TTP is closely affiliated with al Qaeda remnants operating from within Pakistan's tribal areas, and is thought to have assisted in the December 2009 suicide attack against the CIA at Camp Chapman in Khost, Afghanistan. In November 2013 Maulana Fazlullah, a hardline militant commander from Pakistan's Swat Valley, was appointed as the overall TTP commander following Hakimullah's death at the hands of a US drone strike. Mehsud's death caused significant disquiet in Pakistan and threatens to derail Nawaz Sharif's much vaunted peace talks with the organisation.



Maulana Fazlullah named as new Head of TTP in November 2013. Photo: Source unknown.

#### 437 Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).

The IMU arose after the fragmentation of the USSR and the rise of several newly-independent central Asian states. Initially composed of former Soviet soldiers, village mullahs and impoverished farmers from the Ferghana Valley (where the Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Tajik borders converge), the group has extended its reach across central and south Asia. The IMU's stated goal is to establish an Islamic Caliphate across central Asia, incorporating all of the post-soviet states and China's Xinjiang Province. Following severe repression by the Government of Uzbekistan and then heavy losses during the 2001 US invasion of Afghanistan, the IMU fled south to the Afghan-Pakistan border regions, establishing links to other militant groups, such as al Qaeda. Despite occasional conflict with local Pashtun tribes, the IMU continues to enjoy sanctuary within Pakistan's tribal areas. From here they are able to attract support from disaffected Central Asian fighters (their numbers have swollen from several hundred to several thousand fighters since 2001). Recently, IMU splinter groups, such as the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), have emerged to conduct successful attacks on US and Israeli embassies as well as public bazaars in Uzbekistan.

#### 438 Al Qaeda (AQ). Trans. *The Base*.

Al Qaeda emerged from the mujahideen networks on the Afghan-Pakistan border during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The movement began under the leadership of Osama bin Laden from a core group of foreign fighters (mostly Arabs and Yemenis) but quickly evolved into a worldwide

network of affiliated groups. Al-Qaeda's goals are to replace moderate 'apostate' Governments in Muslim countries (the near enemy) in order to re-establish the Islamic Caliphate. US support for Israel, the House of Saud and other moderate governments in the region (as well as the ongoing presence of US troops in Islamic lands) is perceived to be the biggest obstacle to the re-establishment of the Caliphate. As a consequence, al Qaeda's original jihad against the near enemy has turned into a global struggle against the US and its allies (the far enemy).

**439** In early 1997 the Taliban discovered a Saudi plot to assassinate Osama bin Laden and invited him to move to Kandahar for his own protection. Bin Laden agreed and fostered his relationship with the Taliban's senior leadership by funding military purchases, building mosques and running training camps for sympathetic fighters. From his base of operations in Afghanistan, bin Laden was directly responsible for a remarkable series of high-profile attacks against the US and its allies, including the 1998 bombing of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the attack on the USS Cole in Yemen and the 9/11 attacks in the US homeland. The visual impact and symbolic value of these strikes has summoned support from sympathetic communities and encouraged imitation from likeminded groups around the world. Following the US invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent loss of the group's training facilities, the core of the senior leadership, including Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri, retreated to Pakistan where they remained disconnected from the wider Taliban-based insurgency in Afghanistan. Bin Laden was later tracked to the city of Abbottabad, Pakistan, where he was killed by US Special Forces on 2 May 2011 in the Op. NEPTUNE'S SPEAR raid on a compound where he had been 'hiding in plain sight' with his family since at least 2006. Al Zawahiri subsequently became the group's symbolic leader in the region. As few as 75 al Qaeda fighters are thought to be in Afghanistan, largely restricted to remote areas in north-eastern Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the terrorist network seeks to expand, and the al Qaeda–Taliban relationship remains intact.





Osama bin Laden, was shot dead by US Special Forces on 2 May 2011. Photo: Source unknown.

## TALIBAN STRATEGY

**440** After a few false starts and a disastrous attempt at standing and fighting against ISAF forces in the Panjwai (south west of Kandahar city) in 2006, the Taliban have adopted a long term strategy predicated on the belief that coalition forces would eventually disengage from the region.

**441** The key to their eventual success, therefore, is to ensure that the government that is left in the wake of departing international forces has been unable to establish sufficient capacity or legitimacy to survive a concerted Taliban offensive. Should coalition forces and agencies succeed in fostering a host government whose capacity for service delivery and security in the countryside affords it a broad-based legitimacy, it is unlikely that the Taliban will achieve their aims. As such, the Taliban are pursuing a two-pronged strategy. First, and crucially, they seek to prevent the coalition state-building effort by undermining support for the government. Second, they are attempting to foster the early disengagement of international forces by drawing them into an exhausting asymmetric conflict and thereby undermining public and political support for the ISAF mission in troop contributing countries.

**442 Preventing the State-Building Effort.** The Taliban aim to prevent the coalition state-building effort by isolating the government from the population, labeling the state as corrupt, ineffective and apostate and demonstrating the inability of the state to provide security or deliver basic services

to the countryside. Where possible, the Taliban will contrast the ineffectiveness of the government with effective Taliban-controlled shadow institutions.

**443** The key target of this line of operation is the population. Insurgents wage a silent war of intimidation and persuasion throughout the year (not just in the so-called fighting season) in order to isolate the population from the government. Much of the propaganda is aimed at three key messages:

1. The inability of the government and coalition forces to provide security in the districts and otherwise improve the lives of locals.
2. The presence of an infidel occupier supporting a corrupt, non-Shari'a State.
3. The inevitability of their eventual victory and the consequences of siding with the Afghan government.

**444** The Taliban reinforce these messages by out-governing the government in many districts. They have appointed shadow governors who levy taxes and conscript fighters. They have used the madrasa networks to substitute for an ineffective state-run education system. They have installed Shari'a courts to resolve disputes and deliver swift and predictable justice and they claim to protect locals from otherwise rampant warlords and criminals. Their strategy is successful where they are able to point to the establishment of peace, stability and security in the areas under their direct control.

*"Insurgency can best be understood as a process of competitive state-building rather than simply an instance of collective action".*

- Stathis Kalyvas

**445** In areas under coalition or government control, the Taliban seek to coerce the population from cooperating with or supporting the government. Taliban groups have seized control of village centres, posted 'night letters', thrown acid on the faces of school girls, infiltrated Afghan security forces and terrorised locals by killing any suspected of supporting the government. A common tactic is the re-infiltration of 'cleared'



areas in order to perform executions of police officers, government officials or pro-government locals. Their strategy is successful where there is an atmosphere of fear, insecurity and intimidation amongst local communities within government controlled areas.

**446 Exhausting International Forces & Agencies.** The Taliban's second line of operation is aimed at international forces and agencies and seeks to foster their early disengagement by raising the political, human and financial costs of the international presence in Afghanistan.

**447** Insurgents attempt to draw out the conflict by avoiding decisive confrontation with superior international forces, while at the same time engaging in targeted attacks on both civilian and military personnel. Increasing use of IED's has enabled insurgents to inflict significant casualties on international forces while preserving their strength for the planned offensive against the Afghan government once international forces have withdrawn. Asymmetric tactics such as ambushes, raids and roadside bombings have been successful in distracting and diluting international efforts by forcing coalition forces to engage in costly force protection measures that do little to progress ISAF's counterinsurgency strategy. Such attacks have led to the withdrawal of several aid agencies from the more volatile parts of the countryside and limited the freedom of movement of coalition forces – all of which further isolates international forces and agencies from local populations.

### ASYMMETRY OF INTEREST

The 'asymmetry of interest' in the Afghanistan conflict favours the insurgent. Here the interest of the insurgent in the outcome of the conflict far outweighs the interest of the US and its coalition partners, which declines if the al Qaeda–Afghanistan nexus is no longer decisive in their strategic considerations. The insurgents are by-and-large native to the area of operations and, as such, they have

nowhere else to go. Moreover, the insurgents believe they have the patience and the will to exhaust their enemy.

The insurgents seek to impose costs on the coalition that generate political resistance on the home-front of its members to further prosecuting the counter-insurgency campaign, pushing them to a point where the war is no longer worth fighting. Additionally, the drawn out counter-insurgency timeline in Afghanistan does not match the much shorter political timeframes for success in many coalition capitals, especially when key Afghan Government institutions must be built from the ground up.

*Source: George Friedman, STRATFOR.*

### ENABLERS & VULNERABILITIES

**448** The Taliban have developed a sophisticated set of enablers for sustaining their operations. To date these have contributed to the resilience and strength of the insurgency. However, they also represent points of vulnerability as any degradation of these capabilities would limit their ability to conduct operations in Afghanistan. Key enablers include sanctuary for their senior leadership, a steady stream of recruits, weapons, the consent (or acquiescence) of local communities and finance.

**449 Sanctuary.** Pakistan's support for Afghanistan-focused insurgents and its failure to interdict IED materiel and components continue to undermine the stability of Afghanistan and pose an enduring challenge to the coalition campaign. Insurgent safe havens provide a significant regenerative capacity, together with operational and financial support, training and associated infrastructure. As a result insurgents remain resilient and determined, and will likely attempt to regain lost ground and influence following the drawdown of international forces.

**450 Leadership.** The Taliban and other extremist groups rely on charismatic and credible leadership to recruit new members. A history of resistance during the Soviet occupation is almost a pre-requisite and many senior leaders continue to refer to a tradition of resistance to infidel occupiers. Jalaluddin Haqqani, in particular, is renowned for his role as a fighter in the Khalis faction of Hezb-i-Islami during the Soviet occupation. Mullah Omar, on the other hand, whilst active during the resistance, derives much of his authority from his stunt in 1994 when he removed the cloak of the prophet Mohammed from Kandahar's Khirka Sharif shrine and proclaimed himself Amir al-Mu'minin (commander of the faithful). Osama bin Laden has come to fame largely as a result of al Qaeda's success in targeting the US in Yemen, Africa and the American homeland.

**451** Although Special Forces operations against local commanders in Afghanistan can cause short term disruption to the operational capability of the insurgency, these leaders are typically replaced by emerging commanders from over the border. As long as the senior leadership enjoys sanctuary in Pakistan from where they can recruit, train, supply and plan operations over the border it is unlikely that there will be anything more than containment in Afghanistan. However, the insurgency remains vulnerable to a change in Pakistani policy toward their continuing presence in Quetta. Should Pakistan start directly targeting senior Taliban leaders, the insurgents would be forced to fight on two fronts. Neutralisation of key leaders in Pakistan would not only undermine morale but significantly impact on the Taliban's ability to attract new recruits and direct operations over the border.

**452 Recruits.** The Taliban and other extremist organisations have an almost inexhaustible number of recruits pouring out of the Deobandi madrassas and Pashtun refugee camps in Pakistan. Analysts believe that the insurgency could sustain thousands of casualties a year for over 20 years with little operational impact. These young recruits are often referred to as neo-Taliban. Many have no memory of the Soviet occupation and little experience in government during the Taliban era. Most have grown up in Pakistan and their knowledge of

Afghanistan is largely based on the descriptions relayed to them by madrasa teachers and Taliban recruiters. With little experience of traditional village life, these young Afghans are guided less by Pashtunwali – the complex mix of norms, customs, codes and institutions which govern life in typical Afghan villages – and more by the radical versions of Islam promulgated by the Pakistani madrassas, which emphasise shari'a, jihad and resistance to occupation. Dislocated from the social and normative constraints of regular community life these young radicals have shown less compunction about civilian deaths and are responsible for some of the bloodiest attacks.

**453** Because many of the ideologically driven foot soldiers of the insurgency are recruited from displaced Afghans on the Pakistani side of the border, the Taliban remain vulnerable to Pakistani and international efforts to reform the madrassas and resettle or repatriate refugees, thus emptying the camps which feed the insurgency.

*"In order to eradicate mosquitoes it is more efficient to drain the swamp than to try and swat every individual insect".*

**454** In addition to Pakistan-based recruits, Afghanistan's rural communities furnish the insurgency with a host of low-level fighters and district commanders. These practice flexible alignment politics depending on the balance of threats, rewards and solidarity factors. Many are paid to emplace roadside bombs, fire rockets or mortars at NATO bases or participate in more coordinated activity for a few weeks or months every year. These local recruits are motivated more by the absence of security, government services or opportunity in their districts than by any real sympathy for Taliban ideology.

**455** Local recruits have been motivated to support the Taliban largely as a result of governance failure. As such, Taliban recruitment from local communities remains vulnerable to the extension of Government into rural areas. This includes the provision of key services such as education, health and rule of law as well as enabling infrastructure such as electricity and roads. Improved governance will help to reduce grievances and undermine

insurgent groups, intent on portraying the state as ineffective and corrupt. In addition, it is likely to demonstrate progress in the state-building effort and force the reassessment of opportunistic locals who joined the Taliban only when it appeared that momentum was swinging behind the insurgency.

*“The first requirement of countering the Taliban at the village level requires good governance”.*

#### **- Afghan National Directorate of Security**

**456** Without the ability to maintain a flow of willing recruits, either from within the local population or from across the border, the Taliban will be vulnerable to attrition, as was the case of the remnants of the Malayan Races Liberation Army, which was reduced to a fugitive existence, isolated and irrelevant, in the Thai border region.

### **FACTORS AFFECTING SUPPORT FOR THE TALIBAN**

The main drivers of local support for the Taliban include:

**Cronyism** – the systematic favouring of preferred clients, tribes or groups whilst leaving others out of key government decision making fora. Examples include the administrations put together by Jan Mohammed Khan (Popalzai) and Gul Agha Sherzai (Barakzai) in Uruzgan and Kandahar which limited key appointments to members of their own respective tribes. In contrast, the Taliban appeals to a religious narrative which claims to rise above tribal affiliation.

**Local Conflicts** – most of these have taken the form of conflict over scarce resources such as land and water and have been exacerbated by the return of millions of refugees to the villages, homes and farms they abandoned decades previously. The continuing absence of a functioning judicial system or other conflict resolution mechanism

at a local level means that many of these conflicts are left to fester. If heard at all, the outcome is often determined by bribery. The Taliban have become adept at using local conflicts to their advantage.

**Corruption** – includes large scale ransacking of State resources (grand corruption) as well as the payment of bribes to police and government officials in return for preferential treatment (petty corruption). In the south, many corrupt officials closely linked to President Karzai were appointed due to their strong anti-Taliban stance. However, analysts argue that these officials create at least as many Taliban sympathisers as they kill Taliban. In contrast, the Taliban have established an ombudsman system to investigate abuses of power in their own cadres, removing those found guilty.

**Lack of Opportunity** – unfulfilled expectations of a peace dividend following the ousting of the Taliban have contributed to growing discontent, especially amongst the jobless youth. The inability to provide essential services and livelihoods to rural areas has made people more susceptible to Taliban pro-propaganda.

**457 Weapons.** Small arms, heavy machineguns, mortars, rocket propelled grenades, 107 mm fin stabilised rockets, IED componentry and home-made explosives are readily available throughout the region. Notably the insurgency also receives a steady supply of these systems from state sponsors.

**458 Tacit Consent.** The insurgency has grown in both reach and virulence without a large base of active support from within the population. However, it cannot progress without at least the tacit consent, or fearful acquiescence of many local

communities. Insurgents rely on locals for food, water, supplies, and intelligence. They seek to lever this through a mix of coercion and persuasion. In areas where residents feel safe and secure, the insurgency struggles to gain the consent necessary to conduct operations.

## SHABNAMAH:

### *Night Letters*

Shabnamah ('night letters') have been a traditional instrument of Afghan religious leaders, mujahideen, rebellious tribes and others for encouraging communities to oppose the State. The letters appear at night, posted to trees, mosques and government buildings. Recipients are informed by illustration, poetry or prose what they should or should not do and what rewards or penalties they should expect.

The Taliban have adopted night letters as a cost-effective method of instruction and intimidation. Some of the letters are designed to persuade readers to support the Taliban by appealing to religious, cultural and historical themes through the medium of traditional Afghan poetry. However, most letters represent overt intimidation and promise death to anyone who defies their edicts.

Letters typically instruct Afghans to:

- (i) Offer no assistance to ISAF (infidel occupiers) or the Afghan government (apostate puppet).
- (ii) Not divulge the identities of mujahideen.
- (iii) Cease participating in women's education and other un-Islamic initiatives.
- (iv) Cease working on Government or NGO development projects.

Letters also regularly refer to the inevitability of US withdrawal and Taliban success. For example:

*"The Americans may stay for five years, they may stay for ten years, but eventually they will leave, and when they do, we will come back to this village and kill every family that has collaborated with the Americans or the government"*

Some letters are addressed to individuals, such as teachers, government officials and locally employed development workers. For example:

*"You [name removed] teaching at [name of girl's school]. You should be afraid of God. We warn you to leave your job as a teacher as soon as possible otherwise we will cut the heads off your children and will set light to your daughter. This is the first and last warning".*

The tactic is successful in creating an atmosphere of fear due to the Taliban's record of making good on the promised consequences. Government officials have been assassinated, relatives murdered and dozens of schools and clinics have been burned.

Night letters have contributed to the success of the Taliban's principal strategy of preventing the state-building effort. As a result of the night letter campaign, government services have been interrupted, development projects terminated, police officers quit and several schools and medical clinics have shut down.

**459 Finance.** Each of the main insurgent groups receives a mix of external and internal funding to support their activities. External funding typically originates from supportive communities in Arab states or in Pakistan. It may be delivered directly via the *hawala system* or indirectly through a complex web of connections designed to conceal the source and route of the donations (often involving Islamic charities). Internal funding is generated through Afghanistan's narcotics trade, the establishment of protection rackets, vehicle checkpoints (especially

along key smuggling routes), kidnapping, and by extorting a proportion of the funds provided for major development projects.

**460 Narcotics.** The Taliban-led insurgency in the southern Afghanistan, in particular, is largely possible as a result of narcotics-derived revenues, which are estimated to contribute up to 60% of insurgent financing. Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of illicit opium, which amounted to 3,700 tons in 2012 (UNODC). And insurgent penetration of Afghanistan's narcotics market is both extensive and expanding. Funds are used to pay and arm local fighters and compensate the families of suicide bombers. As a result of their reliance on the narcotics trade, however, the Taliban remain vulnerable to effective counter-narcotics measures. The Taliban has a vertically integrated opium production structure, including financing, that may be targeted on many levels. Moreover, individuals involved in the trade, including farmers, are cognisant that the cultivation of poppy is *haram* (forbidden).

### HAWALA

Hawala is a legal alternative money transfer system based on the reputations of a global network of money brokers (hawaladars). A customer typically approaches a hawaladar in one location and provides him with a sum of money to be transferred to a recipient in another location. The hawaladar calls another hawaladar in the recipient's city and instructs him to disburse the funds (minus a commission). The transfer generates a debt between the hawaladars which is usually settled at a later date through another transfer in the opposite direction.

**461 Propaganda.** The insurgency dominates the information environment, predicated on a common culture and religion. The Taliban theme for the past decade has been that they are fighting a foreign occupation. Now that the ANSF has taken over the operational lead for security

and as coalition forces draw down, this message increasingly lacks credibility.

**462 Civilian Casualties (CIVCAS).** Insurgents are responsible for the vast majority of injuries to local people (85% of CIVCAS was caused by insurgents between 1 October 2012 and 31 March 2013), largely through their indiscriminate emplacement of large numbers of IEDs.

### STATE OF THE INSURGENCY IN 2014

**463** The insurgency in 2014 is less of an existential threat to the Afghan state than it has been at any stage over the past five years. The coalition force uplift and ANSF development have pushed the insurgency into the most remote communities and degraded its capability. In 2013, the Taliban failed to achieve the intent of Op KHALID IBN AL-WALID (the Drawn Sword of God) whose five stated objectives were: to increase violence; weaken the ANSF; limit ISAF's ability to move freely; conduct attacks aimed at garnering media coverage; and to promote insecurity through propaganda and influence. Although their relationship with al Qaeda remains intact, the latter's presence is much reduced (allegedly as few as 75 fighters in Afghanistan), and is restricted through coalition pressure to isolated areas of north-eastern Afghanistan.

**464** Nevertheless, the insurgency remains a potent force for as long as it is able to draw upon sanctuaries and support in Pakistan. Insurgents have maintained their influence in a number of rural districts that serve as facilitation routes into major urban centres, including Kandahar City and Kabul and rely upon high profile raids, assassination and intimidation of local power brokers and officials to undermine perceptions of the Afghan Government's ability to provide security. Their actions are responsible for the vast majority of civilian casualties in Afghanistan. Insurgents employ mainly asymmetric means including the emplacement of large numbers of IEDs to contest the battlespace, and are inclined to avoid large engagements with security forces to preserve their combat power prior to the coalition withdrawal. In some cases insurgents have entered into ceasefires and other local accommodations with the ANSF.

## Chapter 5 – Counterinsurgency

- Legacy (2001-2008)
- The Troop Surge (2009-2013)
- Assessment of Progress (circa 2014)
- Transition, Withdrawal and Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT (2014+)

*“It all began so well. As the Northern Alliance, heavily supported by US Special Forces and massive airpower, swept through Afghanistan in October and November of 2001 al Qaeda and their Taliban allies fled to the mountains and havens of the south and east, or over the border into the Pakistani tribal areas, in seeming disarray. While a number of questions remained about the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden, and the nature of the post-conflict configuration of Afghanistan, the overall impression was still one of stunning victory”*

- Dr Tim Bird, Joint Services Command & Staff College, UK

### LEGACY (2001-2008)

**500** The mission in Afghanistan was simple. A combination of US Air Power, small teams of CIA and Special Forces on the ground and the residue of the Northern Alliance toppled the Taliban in a matter of weeks. Rather than get bogged down in a costly and potentially open-ended commitment to rebuilding the state that was left in the Taliban's wake, the US President and Secretary of Defense articulated a light “footprint” strategy and began to turn their attention to other fronts in what was becoming known as the ‘Global War on Terror (GWOT)’.

**501** In an unprecedented show of support, NATO invoked Article 5 for the first time in the history of the alliance and sent an initial force of

5,000 troops to help secure Kabul. From the outset the NATO plan for Afghanistan encompassed four key phases:

- Assessment and preparation, including initial security operations in Kabul.
- Geographic expansion to encompass the remainder of the countryside.
- Stabilisation of the security situation in each of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.
- Transition of security responsibility to Afghan security forces.

**502** The popularity of ISAF amongst Kabulis led to the enthusiastic expansion of the force through the establishment of a German-led regional command in the northern provinces (October 2004) followed by Italian, British and US led regional commands in the west (September 2005), south (July 2006) and east (October 2006). Once in place, these commands were tasked with overseeing the stabilisation of the provinces and districts within their area of operation before eventual transition (to Afghan forces).

**503** However, from the outset ISAF struggled to attract sufficient troops from coalition nations to accomplish the task. At the same time as NATO began expanding its area of operations in Afghanistan, Iraqi insurgents as well as Sunni and Shia sectarian militia unleashed a bitter and increasingly violent civil war in that country. The situation in Iraq served to deflect US resources and attention from Afghanistan at a crucial stage in the execution of the ISAF expansion plan. In addition, cost, capacity and domestic considerations served to limit the numbers of troops offered from other coalition members, all of which led to insufficient resourcing for the stabilisation phase of the ISAF strategy. The combination of limited security forces, negligible government capacity, active promotion of informal ‘security brokers’ or ‘warlords’ in order to secure coalition lines of communication, and rising resentment toward the slow pace of redevelopment, created the ideal conditions for the Taliban to regroup and re-infiltrate the countryside.

By the time that the situation in Iraq had improved sufficiently for ISAF to substantially increase troop numbers in Afghanistan, coalition forces were facing a widespread and deeply entrenched insurgency.

**504** The influence of the campaign in Iraq on the situation in Afghanistan is complex. Initially, the conflict in Iraq served to divert resources destined for Afghanistan. However, as the Iraqi campaign unfolded, the war in Iraq provided an ideal test-bed for the rediscovery of counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine, strategy and tactics amongst the US military. Faced with a full-blown insurgency that was beginning to take on the dimensions of a civil war, the Commander of Multinational Forces-Iraq, GEN George Casey, established the COIN Center for Excellence - Iraq (a similar organisation, the COIN Training Center, was later established in Afghanistan). In 2006 the US Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) initiated two unique programs to support the COIN effort in Iraq. First, a program to deploy social scientists to Iraq as members of 'human terrain teams' was launched in order to assist commanders to develop an understanding of the politics, sociology, culture and underlying drivers of instability amongst local populations. Second, GEN David Petraeus began to gather a team of military officers, development workers, state department officials and academics to begin drafting a new *Army Field Manual on Counterinsurgency* (FM 3-24). A few months after the publication of the manual Petraeus succeeded GEN Casey as the new US Commander in Iraq and was able to implement the theory in practice.

**505** As a result of the rediscovery, refinement and perceived success of the new COIN strategy in Iraq, many of the approaches that were deemed necessary for combating the insurgency in Afghanistan from 2008 onward had been tried and tested by an entire generation of US forces and agencies. Faced with the rapid adaptation of their senior coalition partner, other troop contributing nations began to implement their own reforms. The UK published JDP 3-40 *The Military Contribution to*

*Stabilisation* in 2009 which took the lessons from both Iraq and Afghanistan and situated them within a broader context of societal conflict and state fragility. Similarly, French, Canadian, Dutch, German and several Scandinavian countries began to adapt their forces to the realities of COIN operations in the 21st century.

### COUNTERINSURGENCY (COIN)

COIN is a complex effort that integrates the full range of civilian and military agencies. It is often more population-centric (focused on securing and controlling a given population or populations) than enemy-centric (focused on defeating a particular enemy group). Note that this does not mean that COIN is less violent than any other conflict: on the contrary, like any other form of warfare it always involves loss of life. It is an extremely difficult undertaking, is often highly controversial politically, involves a series of ambiguous events that are extremely difficult to interpret, and often requires vastly more resources and time than initially anticipated. In particular, governments that embark upon COIN campaigns often severely underestimate the requirement for a very long-duration, relatively high-cost commitment (in terms of financial cost, political capital, military resources and human life). The capabilities required for COIN may be very similar to those required for peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance, stabilization operations, and development assistance missions. However, the intent of a COIN campaign is to build popular support for a government while marginalizing the insurgents: it is therefore fundamentally an armed political competition with the insurgents. Consequently, control (over the environment, the population,



the level of security, the pace of events, and the enemy) is the fundamental goal of COIN, a goal that distinguishes it from peace operations or humanitarian intervention. Within these broad characteristics, the specific nature of any particular COIN campaign arises from the complex interaction of three key factors: the characteristics of the environment (physical, economic, political and human) in which it takes place; the nature of the insurgent group (or groups); and the nature of the counterinsurgent government and its security forces.

*US Government Interagency COIN Guide,  
January 2009*

## THE TROOP SURGE (2009-2013)

### The U.S. Strategic Review

**506** On 4 November 2008, some seven years into the war against the Taliban which George W. Bush initiated, the US elected its 44th President, Barack Obama. Upon taking the oath of office, the new President embarked upon the most wide-ranging review of the Afghan campaign to date. The review began with the mid-tour recalling of GEN David McKiernan and the appointment of GEN Stanley A. McChrystal—a veteran of the COIN campaign in Iraq. It concluded in December 2009 with the announcement of a new strategy in the Afghanistan-Pakistan (Af-Pak) region and an additional 30,000 US troops to accomplish the task.

**507** On 1 December 2009, at the US Military Academy at West Point, the President outlined the Af-Pak strategy. The key idea behind the new approach was to open up a window of 18-24 months in which the US would invest heavily in the region in the hope that it could degrade the insurgency on both sides of the border, whilst simultaneously building sufficient local capacity in order for Afghans to secure and govern their own country.

### DENY, DISRUPT, DEGRADE, DEFEAT OR DISMANTLE?

The strategic review conducted by President Obama and the National Security Committee focused heavily on the ultimate objectives of US efforts in Afghanistan. Options ranging from strategic containment (which involved a return to Rumsfeld's "light footprint" strategy) through to fully-resourced nation-building (which involved a large troop commitment for more than 10 years) were considered and costed. The resulting strategy focused on DENYING the Taliban access to key population centres and lines of communication, DISRUPTING the Taliban outside of these areas and DEGRADING them to levels manageable by the Afghan government. Importantly, the new strategy no longer referred to DEFEATING or DISMANTLING the Taliban and the additional 30,000 troops (bringing the total US contribution to around 100,000) were generally considered insufficient for this broader objective.

**508** Accompanying the strategy, GEN McChrystal proposed four big changes to the way in which ISAF had been conducting operations. First, McChrystal ordered the acceleration of ANSF development and the adoption of a new 'partnering' approach to their training. Second, he reinvigorated the COIN effort with a renewed focus on population security and governance reform in an attempt to reverse Taliban penetration of local communities and re-connect the government with the population. Third, in recognition that the mission was no longer to defeat and dismantle the Taliban, he enhanced existing programs for the reintegration of reconcilable insurgent fighters. Finally, with a view to making demonstrable progress in the 18-24 month window afforded by the troop surge,

McChrystal ordered the geographic concentration of ISAF efforts within specific key terrain districts of strategic importance in order to regain the initiative against the insurgency.

*“Pre-occupied with the protection of our own forces, we have operated in a manner that distances us – physically and psychologically – from the people we seek to protect”*

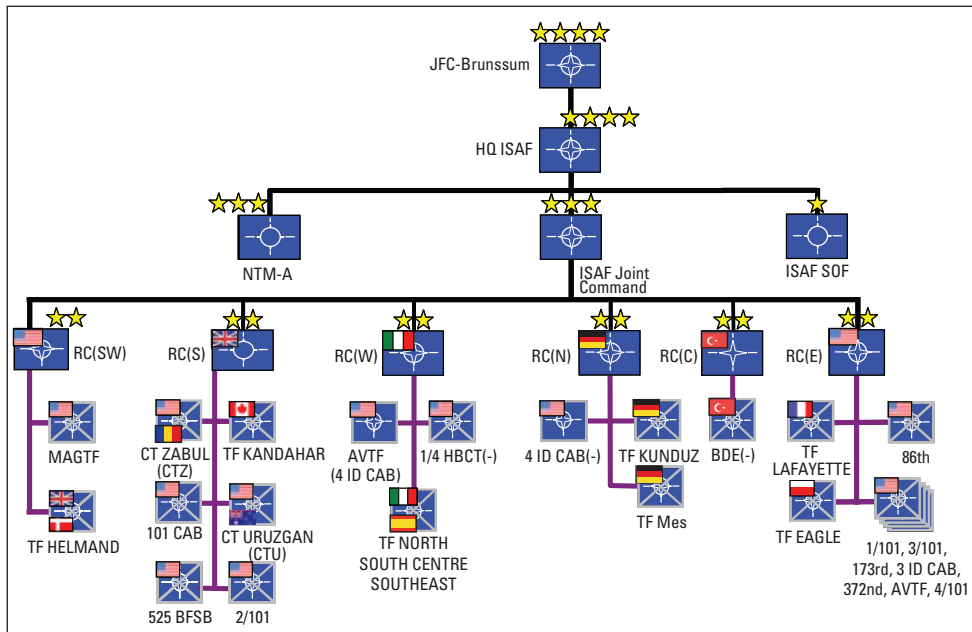
- Stanley A. McChrystal, former COMISAF

### ISAF Organisation

**509** Almost immediately GEN McChrystal began simplifying ISAF command and control arrangements in order to attain unity of effort amongst the multitude of partners and stakeholders operating in Afghanistan. Prior to his appointment, there were two distinct command structures in operation. ISAF, a NATO headquarters, reported to NATO Joint Forces Command at Brunssum, whilst the US Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) reported to CENTCOM. The organisation responsible for

training the ANSF (Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan) also belonged to CENTCOM who maintained responsibility for the ANSF even after they had completed training and were deployed alongside NATO forces. There was no operational-level headquarters and with the exception of RC(E) none of the regional commands had a standing divisional headquarters.

**510** Almost all of these problems were resolved over the course of 2009 and 2010. Two new three star commands were established reporting to COMISAF. First, a new operational command was created (ISAF Joint Command) and given responsibility for implementing COMISAF's campaign plan and overseeing the daily operations of all Regional Commands, PRTs and partnered ANSF COIN operations. Second, a new three star training establishment was formed (NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan) in recognition of the increasing importance of the training of Afghan Security Forces within the President's new strategy.



ISAF Command Structure During the Surge.

With the establishment of these two subsidiary commands, COMISAF was able to coordinate both the COIN operations essential for Phase III (stabilisation) and the ANSF development essential for Phase IV (transition) of the NATO plan. Around the same time, RC (South) was split into RC (South) and RC (Southwest) and a complete divisional headquarters assigned to each – the US Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) in RC(SW) and US Army 10th Mountain Division in RC(S). Moreover, the activities of all coalition Special Forces for the first time came under the control of COMISAF and were integrated into the wider campaign plan.

















































**511** As a result of the US reinvigoration of the war in Afghanistan, pledges for additional troops began to arrive from ISAF partners. At the height of the coalition force uplift there were approximately 100,000 US personnel and 50,000 other international military forces bringing the total number of ISAF troops in country to around 150,000.

### **National Caveats and National Campaigns**

**512** However, despite the significant increase in troop numbers during the surge, operations continued to be constrained by the presence of national caveats—restrictions that many troop contributing nations placed on their forces’

Headquarters	Level	Mission
HQ ISAF	Political / Military-Strategic / Operational	ISAF, in partnership with the Afghan Government, conducts population-centric COIN operations, enables an expanded and effective ANSF, and supports improved governance and development in order to protect the Afghan people and provide a secure environment for sustainable stability.
IJC	Operational / Tactical	The combined team and supporting organizations, in close coordination, will conduct joint operations in key populated areas to disrupt insurgent activities, protect the people against enemy attacks, and maintain the conditions for social, economic, and cultural development.
NTM-A	Operational / Tactical	NTM-A, in coordination with key stakeholders, generates the ANSF, develops capable ministerial systems and institutions, and resources the fielded force to build sustainable capacity and capability in order to enhance the Afghan Government’s
ISAF SOF	Tactical	ISAF Special Operations Forces (SOF) protect the population, enable the ANSF and neutralize malign influence in order to shape a secure environment for sustainable stability. Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (CFSOCC-A) plans and synchronizes direct and indirect special operations activities in support of COMISAF COIN strategy by building ANSF capacity in order to protect the population and defeat the insurgency threatening the stability of the Afghan Government.

*Roles of ISAF Higher Commands.*

	Albania	257		Greece	132		Portugal	114
	Armenia	40		Hungary	483		Romania	1726
	Australia	1550		Iceland	2		Singapore	48
	Austria	3		Ireland	7		Slovakia	296
	Azerbaijan	94		Italy	3815		Slovenia	79
	Belgium	528		Jordan	0		Spain	1499
	Bosnia & Herzegovina	45		Republic of Korea	426		Sweden	500
	Bulgaria	608		Latvia	136		The FYROM*	163
	Canada	2900		Lithuania	188		Tonga	55
	Croatia	299		Luxembourg	9		Turkey	1799
	Czech Republic	463		Malaysia	30		Ukraine	20
	Denmark	748		Mongolia	62		United Arab Emirates	35
	Estonia	158		Montenegro	36		United Kingdom	9500
	Finland	165		Netherlands	197		United States	90000
	France	3979		New Zealand	236			
	Georgia	924		Norway	413			
	Germany	4909		Poland	2527		Total	132,203

**Note on numbers** - Figures are calculated by the Force Flow tracking system at SHAPE HQ and count all troops under the Command and Control of COMISAF. Numbers of troops should be taken as indicative as they change daily.

\* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.  
Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

#### *ISAF Troop Contributing Nations at the height of the Surge*

activities to ensure they operate in accordance with respective national laws and policies. The nature and extent of national caveats varied considerably and were informed by such things as domestic support, attitudes to risk, combat capability and constitutional constraints. The most common caveats limited operations to a particular province or excluded certain types of tasking (such as night or combat operations). From the outset, the presence of caveats frustrated ISAF commanders by constraining their ability to apportion forces across the battle space. This led to a situation where the 'whole' ISAF troop strength was considerably less than the sum of its parts.

**513** In addition to national caveats the existence of national campaign plans (typically with a sole focus on the province in which the troop contributing nation had delimited itself) led to the

'provincialisation' of the ISAF mission. Thus we had the Canadians in Kandahar, British in Helmand, Italians in Herat and Australians in Uruzgan (previously Dutch) at various stages pursuing their own national agendas at the provincial level irrespective of wider ISAF priorities across the rest of the battle space. The implications of national campaigns were significant. They undermined ISAF attempts to implement a national strategy, leading to a significant variation in the level of assistance provided to each province and instituted perverse incentives by channeling development funding to the most insecure provinces (where the wealthiest donors are focused) at the expense of secure ones.

*The presence of national campaigns has led to epithets such as **Canadahar** and **Helmandshire** to describe Canadian and British efforts in Kandahar and Helmand.*

### ISAF Campaign Design

**514** The ISAF campaign plan introduced by GEN McChrystal was centred on five lines of operation (LOOs) that were further brigaded into efforts across the critical security, governance and development sectors:

**Security** – (LO01) regain the initiative by protecting the population in densely inhabited areas where the insurgency has established dominance; (LO02) accelerate and expand indigenous force capacity; (LO03) neutralise malign influences.

**Governance** – (LO04) separate the population from the insurgency by supporting Afghan government sub-national structures to establish rule of law and basic services.

**Development** – (LO05) connect contiguous economic corridors, foster community development and generate employment opportunities.

### ISAF Operational Framework

**515** The campaign plan emphasised population-centric COIN operations following the ‘shape, clear, hold, build (SCHB)’ framework advocated in US Counterinsurgency manuals FM 3-24 and JP 3-24. This approach was not possible until the troop surge as there were simply not enough forces to hold previously cleared areas. Prior to the surge Commanders were forced to adopt a raiding approach to COIN – an approach which tended to reinforce the perception of coalition forces as aggressors and conflated tactical successes (in terms of numbers of insurgents killed) with actual measures of strategic effectiveness.

*A popular expression amongst the coalition in Afghanistan prior to the adoption of the SCHB framework was to refer to raiding operations as “mowing the lawn”. ISAF forces would clear an area of insurgents but without sufficient troop numbers to hold the population centres previously cleared, insurgents would simply re-infiltrate and need to be re-cleared at periodic intervals.*

### SHAPE, CLEAR, HOLD, BUILD

**Shape** activity identifies the nature and strength of the insurgent threat in a given area. Shape also refers to influencing the environment for subsequent or parallel counterinsurgency phases. This may include counter-network operations, often utilising Special Forces, directed against insurgents’ command and control structure and local network facilitators.

**Clear** is a task that requires the commander to remove all guerrilla forces and eliminate organized resistance in an assigned area. The force does this by destroying, capturing, or forcing the withdrawal of guerrilla combatants. This task is most effectively initiated by a clear-inzone or cordon-and-search operation. This operation’s purpose is to disrupt insurgent forces and force a reaction by major insurgent elements in the area. Commanders employ a combination of offensive small-unit operations. These may include area saturation patrolling that enables the force to defeat insurgents in the area, interdiction ambushes, and targeted raids. Counterinsurgents must take great care in the clear stage to avoid destruction or disruption of civilian homes and businesses. Collateral damage, indiscriminate targeting, or driving people out of their homes and business in order to establish military headquarters in preparation for the hold stage, even when accompanied by compensation, can have negative second and third order effects.

**Hold.** Ideally host nation forces or combined host nation and coalition forces execute the hold portion of the clear-hold-build approach. Establishment of security forces in bases among the population furthers the continued

disruption, identification, and elimination of the local insurgent leadership and infrastructure. The success or failure of the effort depends, first, on effectively and continuously securing the populace and, second, on effectively re-establishing a government presence at the local level. Measured offensive operations continue against insurgents as opportunities arise, but the main effort is focused on the population.

**Build.** Progress in building support for the host government requires protecting the local populace. People who do not believe they are secure from insurgent intimidation, coercion, and reprisals will not risk overtly supporting COIN efforts. The populace decides when it feels secure enough to support COIN efforts.

*JP 3-24 Counterinsurgency Operations.*

### ISAF Priorities and Sequencing

**516** ISAF identified 80 priority areas (key terrain districts) for executing SCHB operations. These districts constituted areas where the bulk of the Afghan population was concentrated or that contained key centres of economic productivity, infrastructure or commerce routes. The key terrain districts roughly mapped onto the three major highways, Pakistani border regions and the densely populated Helmand river valley. Supplementing these 80 districts were an additional 41 'area of interest' districts which for a variety of reasons were important for supporting operations in the key terrain districts. Of these 121 districts identified as critical to success ISAF estimated that it had the resources to conduct simultaneous operations in roughly one in three, thus necessitating a sequenced approach to even these priority areas.

**517** Three levels of priority were ascribed to key terrain districts:

- **Operational Main Effort:** The Helmand river

valley, Kandahar City and nearby districts such as Maiwand and Panjwai in the Arghandab green zone which connect the two, constituted ISAF's main effort during the surge. These areas had served as Taliban safe havens and bases for operations elsewhere in Afghanistan for a number of years and subsequently became the sites of major ISAF clearing operations such as Op MOSHTARAK (Helmand) and HAMKARI (Kandahar).

### MARJAH CASE STUDY

In mid-2010 Marjah was an insurgent command centre, a base for IED assembling and a nexus of illegal narcotics industry activities. However, during the latter half of 2010 ISAF operations under Op MOSHTARAK succeeded in clearing insurgent safe havens in the district. Now the city is controlled by the Afghan Government. Signs of progress in Marjah include voter registration, increased activity in local marketplaces and the reopening of schools that were closed for several years.

*Report on Progress Toward Security & Stability in Afghanistan, November 2010.*

- **Shaping & Supporting Effort:** Key population centres in RC(E) such as Nangahar, Nuristan Kunar and Laghman (N2LK) which were under the influence of HIG networks and Paktika, Paktia and Khost (P2K) and Ghazni which have served as facilitation routes for Haqqani fighters constituted the secondary effort. Operations in these areas were designed to secure critical lines of communication, expand population security and disrupt Haqqani fighters' access to Kabul.
- **Economy of Force Effort:** Pashtun population centres north of the Hindu Kush such as Badghis, Balkh, Baghlan and Kunduz were the focus of ISAF's third effort. These areas had

played host to a nascent insurgency which has struggled to gain any foothold outside of Pashtun settlements. ISAF and ANSF partnered operations focused on improving freedom of movement along the main transport route (Highway One) and improving security in the key Pashtun areas.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS (CIRCA 2014)

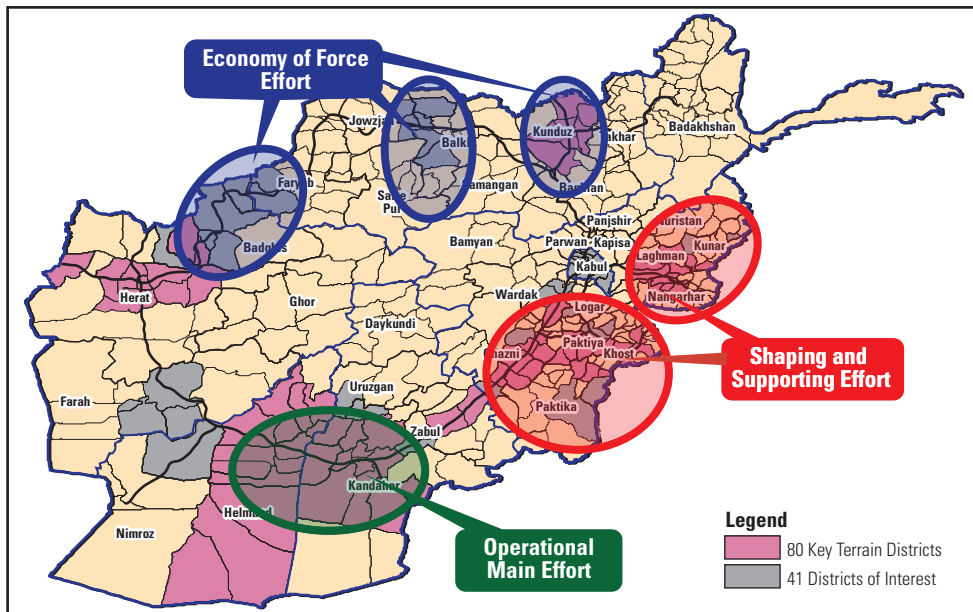
### Security

**518** ISAF's main effort during the surge was to facilitate the conditions for the ANSF to assume full security responsibility for Afghanistan by the end of 2014. This line of operation showed the most progress with local forces growing in both size and capability. In the lead up to transition the ISAF mission shifted to security force assistance, focused on improving ANSF capability rather than fighting the insurgency.

**519** ISAF Special Forces continued to degrade the insurgency as a precursor to handing over security responsibility to Afghan forces.

Increasingly, however, international forces became preoccupied with redeploying personnel, retrograding equipment and realigning bases and C2 structures to enable the ANSF OPLAN 1392 OQAB (eagle) and the NATO-led follow-on mission post 2014. Whereas, ISAF Operational Mentoring & Liaison Teams (OMLTs) had previously concentrated on maneuver, combat support and combat service support units, by 2014 coalition Security Force Assistance Teams (SFATs) were operating mainly at the Brigade Headquarters and Provincial and Regional Operational Coordination Centre (OCC-P/R) levels. As the end of the ISAF mandate approaches, SFATs will refocus to higher levels of command through Corps Advisor Teams (CATs) and capacity building in the ministries of Defence and the Interior manoeuvre, combat support and Coordination Centres (OCC-P/R)..

**520** Despite significant progress it is clear that a coalition presence will be required to consolidate ANSF development until at least 2020. Around 10 states, including Australia, have expressed interest



ISAF Key Terrain Districts.



in contributing to the post-2014 NATO mission, aimed at C2, logistics, ISR and developing a capable Afghan Air Force.

### SEASONALITY

Conflict in Afghanistan tends to follow cyclical seasonal patterns. Spring harvests draw local insurgents away from the fight and into the fields. Similarly, winter cold makes freedom of movement difficult and is often used as a period of recuperation by fighters, some of whom spend the winter in Pakistan. In contrast, warmer weather presents opportunities for insurgents to re-commence operations such as targeted assassinations, ambushes and the emplacement of roadside bombs.

**521 Civilian casualties (CIVCAS)** have been a strategic issue with the potential to impact the success or otherwise of the ISAF mission. Over the course of the campaign CIVCAS as a result of the injudicious use of close air support and Special Forces have alienated local populations and fuelled the insurgency. To mitigate this effect, successive ISAF commanders have attempted to minimise the number and magnitude of CIVCAS and effectively manage the consequences when they occur. Despite the troop surge and major clearing operations in Helmand and Kandahar, the number of CIVCAS attributed to ISAF has fallen since the inception of the new US strategy.

*"ISAF's declared strategy of prioritizing the safety and security of civilians is a welcome development and, as the latter months of 2009 indicate, such policies greatly enhance the protection of all civilians"*

- *Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, UNAMA Report, January 2010*

### POPULATION SECURITY

In COIN, people have to believe that they are more secure and that they are likely to remain more secure by supporting the government rather than the insurgency. Resolve, therefore, becomes a force multiplier, providing a range of signals to the population, the insurgency (and its state sponsors) and the Afghan government. In contrast, insurgents attempt to spread insecurity amongst the population through intimidation and reprisals and create a sense of inevitability about their own eventual success.

*"COIN isn't about making friends with everybody; the imperatives are protecting the people and separating the insurgents from them to gain their support"*

- *Command SGT MAJ Michael T Hall, HQ ISAF*

**522 Key Security Enablers.** ISAF commanders in Afghanistan stressed the need for critical enablers to support the troop surge. These included aviation, ISR, language and cultural capability, Special Forces and civilian expertise in stabilisation, development and governance.

**523 Aviation** was critical for both combat operations (close air support) and mobility around the battlespace. Due to the forbidding terrain and prevalence of IEDs, fixed and rotary wing air assets have been a far more effective and safe way to travel due to the prevalence of IEDs and the demands for route clearance.

**524 ISR** continued to be chronically under-resourced during the surge, with key shortages in UAVs to support battalion-sized task forces and appropriately trained 'white-cell' intelligence analysts to support commander's decision making at all levels.

### FIXING INTELLIGENCE

Significant changes to the way intelligence was conducted in Afghanistan was required in order to implement the new US Strategy. This involved a shift in focus from 'the enemy' to 'the population'.

*"The vast intelligence apparatus is unable to answer fundamental questions about the environment in which U.S. and allied forces operate and the people they seek to persuade. Ignorant of local economics and landowners, hazy about who the powerbrokers are and how they might be influenced, incurious about the correlations between various development projects and the levels of cooperation among villagers, and disengaged from people in the best position to find answers – whether aid workers or Afghan soldiers – U.S. intelligence officers and analysts can do little but shrug in response to high-level decision-makers seeking the knowledge, analysis and information they need to wage a successful counterinsurgency ... the tendency to over emphasise detailed information about the enemy at the expense of the political, economic and cultural environment that supports it becomes even more pronounced at the brigade and regional command levels".*

In order to generate sufficient information about local communities, GEN McChrystal established the Stability Operations Information Centres (SOICs) who were empowered to move between field elements in order to personally visit the collectors of information at the grassroots level (PRTs, atmospheric teams, liaison officers, female engagement teams, NGOs, development workers, UN officials, PSYOPS teams, human terrain teams, infantry battalions, etc) and carry that information back into task force and regional headquarters to guide major policy decisions. From 2010 SOIC

analysts began generating periodic District Narrative Assessments that described the nature of the economy, atmospherics, development, corruption, governance, insurgency and local drivers of conflict in a given district.

*Source: MAJGEN Flynn ISAF CJ2 (2010) Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan.*

**525 Special Forces.** The role of Special Forces (SF) in the war has been a much contested topic over the past decade. Prior to the organisational changes brought about by GEN McChrystal most of the Special Forces in Afghanistan operated under Operation Enduring Freedom and reported to CENTCOM rather than HQ ISAF. This led to a handful of well-documented and spectacular instances of disunity of effort which undermined the COIN campaign. In addition, the targeting of mid-level insurgent commanders seemed to conflate tactical success with actual progress as each fighting season saw a new generation of leaders fill the posts 'vacated' by their forebears the previous year.

**526** However, the new US strategy called for the degradation of the insurgency to levels at which the ANSF could manage the problem. This saw a marked increase in the tempo of SF operations throughout the surge period. Although opinion remains mixed, evidence suggests that Special Forces outpaced the ability for the Taliban to regenerate and, more importantly, influenced Taliban morale and recruitment.

**527 Language and Cultural Capability** was seen as a crucial enabler for population-centric COIN operations where troops were encouraged to 'live amongst' the population. However, service personnel proficient in Pashtu or Dari were in short supply and ISAF forces were heavily reliant on the use of locally-employed interpreters. During the surge period the human terrain system was expanded significantly and provided socio-cultural analysis, often down to village level, to inform commander's engagement strategies and tasking.

**528 Civilian Expertise** in examining the drivers of conflict at a local level and facilitating the expansion of good governance, development and stability in key districts were also in short supply. In what amounted to a 'civilian surge' to accompany the troop surge, several ISAF member states rapidly expanded their pool of deployable civilians. However, critical shortages of expertise in key areas remained in every region.

#### THE AUSTRALIAN CIVILIAN CORPS (ACC)

The Australian Civilian Corps (ACC) is a group of experienced civilian specialists who provide stabilisation and recovery assistance to fragile states and countries experiencing or emerging from conflict or natural disaster. Formed in 2011, the ACC is designed to provide a flexible and timely Australian response that bridges the gap between immediate humanitarian assistance and emergency relief and longer term development programs. Specialists deploy into Australian, UN or bilateral partner programs or host government ministries at the invitation of each country's government. Their work complements the existing work of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade—Australian Aid and other partner agencies.

In Afghanistan the ACC deployed Stabilisation Advisers (STABADs) to work as part of the Provincial Reconstruction Team. The advisers played an important role in the coordination of **district-level** stabilisation and development efforts. Focusing on collaborating with local Afghan leaders to identify community development needs as well as understanding and influencing political dynamics at the district level, the advisers also supported and assisted the Afghan government to plan and deliver essential services to the district in the key areas of health, education, infrastructure, and agriculture.

*Source: Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade*

#### Governance

**529** The ability of the Afghan Government to be seen to govern in a fair and responsive manner is a precondition of success. Regardless of the success of the troop surge, international forces and agencies would be unable to compensate for an Afghan Government that was not seen to govern in a fair and responsive manner. The 'governance' line of operation was designed to facilitate improvements to governance, reduce grievances and marginalise insurgent groups that were intent on portraying the state as ineffective, exclusionary and corrupt.

*Success in Afghanistan ultimately depends on the Afghan government!*



*Members of the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House).*

#### 530 Institutional Capacity Building.

Afghanistan's putative workforce had been decimated by years of conflict, repression, emigration and lack of a functioning education system. Available human capital generally lacks administrative capacity and, in many cases, even basic literacy. In response to this, the Afghan Civil Service Commission, in partnership with international donors, embarked upon training an entire civil service cadre for work in national, provincial and district centres. The benefits of this program, however, are likely to take several years to become apparent.

**531 Sub-National Governance.** A framework for sub-national governance was created during the surge period. However, program implementation has been slow and requires significant legislative change across multiple ministries, agencies and directorates. The main deficiencies in provincial and district level governance include corruption, lack of capacity, lack of visibility and lack of funding of sub-national structures. Local officials generally lack education, experience and resources and face significant opposition from local powerbrokers, who tend to be the real sources of power and authority at a sub-national level. Moreover, government services are largely restricted to provincial and district centres, despite efforts to improve capacity and project service delivery into rural areas.

**532** At the start of the surge period, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) initiated a program to fund the training of 180 district governor positions and 14 deputy provincial governor positions to improve sub-national governance across the country. By the end of the surge in 2013, the IDLG had announced the merit-based appointment of 70 district and deputy district governors, less than half of the targeted amount. The overall impact of these appointments is still to be seen, but it is regarded by the coalition as a positive move towards enhancing governance capacity at the district level. Other IDLG initiatives aimed at improving sub-national governance included the Afghanistan Stabilisation Program (ASP) which is aimed at financing facilities, infrastructure, vehicles and other equipment for district governor's offices, and the Afghanistan Social Outreach Program which sought to establish community councils (shuras) to facilitate communication between local communities and provincial governments.

*"The Afghan government remains highly centralized, with budgeting and spending authority held primarily by the Ministry of Finance and other central ministries in Kabul. Service delivery is implemented by line directorates in the provinces, sometimes with little input from provincial councils*

*or governors. Other constraints include a continuing lack of human capacity to fill key government and leadership positions at sub-national level, limited engagement with civil society, and poor connectivity between national and sub-national levels of government."*

*- Report to Congress on Progress Toward Security & Stability in Afghanistan, July 2013*

### VILLAGE STABILITY OPERATIONS

Village Stability Operations (VSO) were a bottom-up program that sought to establish security and stability bubbles around Afghanistan's rural villages with the intention of shaping these areas to support governance and development. It focused on communities in areas that have little or no Afghan Government presence but who have, nevertheless, opted to resist Taliban infiltration through grass-roots initiatives. In addition to governance and development, the VSO program enables local communities to provide small-scale community-watch policing in their villages through the Afghan Local Police (ALP) (see Chapter 6 for more details). At the heart of the VSO program was a 12 man US Special Forces team (Operational Detachment-Alpha) that was located in or adjacent to local communities, and engaged with them through Village Stability Platforms (VSPs) that provide a range of enabling support. COMISAF's intention is to have Afghan Special Forces take over VSO activity with the drawdown of US forces in Afghanistan.



*Elders from Gereshk listen to Haji Kaduz speak at a shura aimed at encouraging locals to take responsibility for the stabilisation of their own communities.*

**533 Justice & Rule of Law.** The Afghan insurgency is powered by widespread perceptions of injustice and impunity – crimes go unpunished and courts are unable to adjudicate even simple civil cases such as land disputes (a primary source of conflict). While the Taliban parallel justice system is brutal and unpopular, in many areas it is the only option for the resolution of disputes. Success in Afghanistan depends as much on the legitimacy, accessibility and efficiency of justice and rule of law as it does on rebuilding the ANSF.

*A functioning justice system is arguably the centre of gravity for stabilisation in many districts across the country.*

**534** Unfortunately, the justice sector was for a long time neglected by the coalition effort. As a result of lack of progress in the formal sector, during the surge international forces and agencies began looking toward alternative dispute resolution mechanisms at a local level. These included traditional tribal jirgas, village shuras and VSO programs.

**535 Anti-Corruption Initiatives.** Throughout the surge period ISAF and CJATF-Shafafiyat, in close cooperation with the Afghan government, continued their efforts to reduce corruption. The UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported that corrupt payments amounted to US\$3.9 billion in 2012, with an estimated one in two Afghans paying bribes. Current anti-corruption initiatives centre on efforts to improve financial oversight, build judicial capacity to investigate, prosecute and remove corrupt officials

and communicate anti-corruption gains to the Afghan people. Afghanistan's principal anti-corruption bodies are the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption (HOOAC) and the Attorney General's Office (AGO).

### THE PATRONAGE NETWORK

The Afghan state is structured to attract resources from external sources and re-distribute these amongst a network of clients and patrons in the countryside. In this way the state is able to generate revenue and rent legitimacy from local power brokers whilst inoculating itself from the sort of state-society interactions which give rise to demands for better service delivery, transparency, accountability, inclusivity and efficiency.

The vast majority of the budget comes from the international community and goes directly into executive institutions without requiring or permitting legislative involvement. The President appoints provincial and district governors at his discretion and no formal body has the authority to remove a presidential appointee. Although provincial and district councils are popularly elected they have no ability to counterbalance the actions of presidential appointees who control the flow of money, the armed forces and the police all the way down to local level.

Corruption and abuse of power are endemic within the system of patronage which the above structure gives rise to. This in turn reinforces feelings of injustice and hopelessness amongst marginalised communities and fuels the insurgency.

## Development

**536** Despite its 9% real gross domestic product (GDP) growth over the past decade – driven mainly by the high levels of development assistance and the presence of coalition forces – Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest countries with a per capita gross national income (GNI) of just US\$470. Economic growth is expected to slow in 2014, with political and security uncertainties accompanying the election cycle and the coalition withdrawal impacting on business confidence and investment. Basic indicators of human welfare find that Afghans are among the world's most hungry, destitute, non-literate and short-lived people. Afghanistan's UN Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2012 is 0.374 – in the low human development category – placing it at 175 out of 187 states and territories with comparable data.

### HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROFILE

Population	29.8 million (2012)
Urban population	24.0% (2012)
Population growth	2.4% (2012)
Life expectancy	60 years (2011)
Population living below poverty line	36.0% (2008)
Unemployment rate	45.0% (2008)
Adult literacy rate	28.0% (unknown)
Infant mortality rate	71 deaths/1,000 live births (2012)
Child malnutrition	32.9% (2004)
Internally displaced persons	492,777 (2013)

Source: World Bank and CIA World Factbook.

**537 The Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS).** Following two years of extensive consultations, the ANDS was formally launched at the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan in Paris on 12 June 2008. According to the Conference Declaration, the strategy is the

*"roadmap for joint action [international donors and the Afghan government] over the next five years and sets our shared priorities".* The document constitutes the Afghan Government's overarching strategy for promoting growth, generating wealth and reducing poverty and acts as the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), helping to secure debt relief from the IMF and loans from the World Bank. To this end it sets out a 5 year (2008-2013) plan built on three pillars: (i) security; (ii) governance, rule of law and human rights; (iii) economic and social development.

**538** The ANDS is supported by the Afghanistan Compact (agreed earlier at the 2006 London Conference on Afghanistan) which is a joint undertaking between the Afghan Government, 66 states (including Australia) and 15 international organisations to support the long term development of the country. The Afghanistan Compact also established the Joint Coordination & Monitoring Board (JCMB) to monitor progress toward the goals and benchmarks articulated in the ANDS, and evaluate the effectiveness of the aid being provided.

**539** Recognising the relationship between shorter-term stabilisation goals and longer-term development goals, the implementation plan for the ANDS sequenced priorities according to three phases: stabilisation (focused on rule of law and governance); consolidation (focused on basic service delivery); and transformation (focused on economic growth and human security). The Ministry of Finance further grouped the 16 Afghan Government ministries involved in implementing the ANDS into three clusters to focus on the priority areas:

- **Agricultural and rural development** – developing natural resources, enhancing agricultural productivity and agribusiness to improve rural livelihoods
- **Infrastructure and economic growth** – creating an enabling economic environment and infrastructure to attract investment, create



high-value industries and connect Afghanistan to the region and the world.

- **Human resource development** – preparing Afghans for the labour market through technical and vocational education.

**540 Delivery of Aid (Mechanisms & Modalities).** Over two thirds of the international development funding for Afghanistan during the surge was tied to specific donor-initiated projects and delivered directly by donors and their implementing partners. This mode of delivery, whilst initially inevitable, is ultimately self-defeating as it undermines rather than builds the state.

*The international community and the Afghan Government agreed at the 2010 Kabul Conference to align 80% of donor spending with Afghanistan's 22 National Priority Programs (grouped into six categories: Security, Infrastructure Development, Private Sector Development, Agriculture and Rural Development, and Governance), and to channel at least 50% of external aid through the budget – known as the Kabul Process. This commitment was reaffirmed in the 2012 Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF).*

**541** One mode of delivery that provides strong incentives for the Afghan government to build its capacity and improve its accountability is the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). The ARTF was established in 2002 to coordinate financial support to Afghanistan in two areas: (i) meeting the recurrent costs of government such as salaries, operations, maintenance, etc; (ii) targeted investment projects articulated in the ANDS. The fund is supported by 33 donors and is administered by the World Bank. As of December 2012, nearly US\$6.2 billion had been pledged in ARTF contributions, with more than US\$6.1 already paid into the fund.

### NATIONAL SOLIDARITY PROGRAMME

The National Solidarity Programme (NSP) was created in 2003 by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development to develop the ability of Afghan communities to identify, plan, manage and monitor their own projects. Communities elect their NSP representatives to form voluntary Community Development Councils (CDCs). CDCs then prepare Community Development Plans (CDPs), and implement approved subprojects. Once subprojects have been approved the NSP provides direct block grant transfers (with an average grant of \$33,000 and maximum of \$60,000) for the phased implementation of subprojects.

The program is consistently rated as the most popular development program in Afghanistan due to the role that local communities play in the projects. In addition, the process develops important community capacities in consensus-building, accounting, procurement, operations, maintenance and monitoring.

**542 Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)** are hybrid civil-military entities designed to operate as coordinating bodies for the implementation of stabilisation and development assistance at provincial and district level. The first PRT in Afghanistan (Kunduz) was established by the Germans as a bi-lateral reconstruction cell prior to the ISAF mandate. However, on 28 June 2004, at the Summit meeting in Istanbul, NATO announced its expansion from Kabul into the country side with the establishment of PRTs in Mazar-e-Sharif, Meymana, Feyzabad and Baghlan as well as the incorporation of the Kunduz PRT into a new ISAF command structure. Further PRTs were established in the West (2005), South (2006) and East (2006) of the country coinciding with the expansion of ISAF in 2005-2006. During the surge period PRTs became the primary vehicle for the delivery of



stabilisation, development, capacity building and mentoring assistance to provincial authorities. Although the role, structure and approach of each PRT was different, they typically consisted of a mix of civilian and military staff that were co-located with ISAF task forces at the Provincial capital. As a result of the transition process, however, all PRTs in the country have been wound up or transferred to Afghan authorities.

### URUZGAN PRT

The Australian-led PRT in Uruzgan, enabled and protected by ADF and US military personnel, saw civilian officials and military engineers help build a functioning provincial government, establish health and education services, and oversee the construction of road infrastructure to make services accessible to remote communities. At the height of its effort the Uruzgan PRT had over 200 personnel from three ISAF partners, and involved 10 different agencies. Whilst most of these personnel worked at Multi-National Base–Tarin Kot, there were also District Stabilisation Teams (DSTs) based at Chora and Deh Rawud, and mobile teams that regularly visited outlying district centres.

The circumstances in Uruzgan called for coordinated security, development and political engagement, with each line of operations dependent on the other to achieve sustained outcomes. By the time Australia assumed the lead of the PRT in 2010, there were three clear objectives:

- Strengthen formal political and governance institutions in preparation for transition
- Promote political stability among key tribal groups and encourage a more positive political climate which supports legitimate governance in the province.

- Support the Afghan Government's legitimacy through improving service delivery in the areas of rule of law, education, health, agriculture and infrastructure sectors, and to stabilise key areas of Uruzgan through small-scale infrastructure projects.

PRT Uruzgan concluded its mission October 28, 2013, bringing to an end a decade-long effort by the coalition to foster development, improve governance and bring about tribal cooperation in one of Afghanistan's poorest provinces. In 2014, international donors will remain connected to Uruzgan through a small liaison force based in Tarin Kot, and through national programs administered from Kabul

*Source: Department of Defence.*



The Provincial Reconstruction Team Uruzgan

### Sectoral Overviews

**543 Economic Recovery.** When international forces and agencies descend on an area they generate demand for local goods and services such as housing, food, interpreters and skilled labour. Whilst donor consumption stimulates the local economy, it is unlikely to generate sustained growth. For sustained economic development donors need to target investment in specific sectors. This can range from agricultural rehabilitation to health clinics, schools and large infrastructure projects. During the surge period the security bubble created by the expansion of ISAF enabled development agencies to invest in a wide variety

of programs ranging from health and education to agriculture, infrastructure and, most importantly, capacity building and skills development. However, with the approaching transition, the withdrawal of international agencies from the provinces is likely to precipitate a recession in many areas.

*In 2012, domestic revenue (US\$1.6 billion) covered less than 50% of total government expenditure (US\$3.7 billion) making Afghanistan one of the most aid-dependent countries in the world and an effective 'rentier' of the international community, which funds the majority of its public spending.*

**544 Infrastructure.** Infrastructure is fundamental to economic recovery. Transport networks allow freedom of movement, trade and social interaction; telecommunications systems support every element of society from GIRoA, to the private sector, to the media and the wider population; and power generation facilities constitute the engine room of economic production.



*Soldiers from the 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment Task Group patrol along the Australian-funded Mirabad Valley road in Uruzgan Province.*

*One area for optimism is the ICT sector, and in particular Afghanistan's mobile phone network, which is booming as a result of internally generated demand. More than 100,000 Afghans are employed in this sector which pays some of the highest wages in the country. As of July 2013, there are 19.8 million mobile phone subscribers, and 88% of the population live in areas with cellular coverage.*

**545** Road construction is a significant source of employment for the Afghan population and is often used as a means to involve locals in the development of their own communities. The most significant road construction project undertaken is the rehabilitation of the 2,200km ring road which is almost complete. In addition, seven roads linking the ring road to the neighbouring countries of Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Pakistan are underway, and in various stages of completion. The National Rural Access Program (NRAP) manages the restoration of secondary and tertiary routes designed to link district centres in rural areas with provincial capitals and other economic centres.

*Despite a several internationally-funded rail projects, Afghanistan still has very little any rail transportation infrastructure. The country will remain dependent on road and air transport for the foreseeable future.*

**546 Energy.** Improvements to Afghanistan's energy generation and transmission capability are a top priority for the international community, with a number of hydro-electric projects currently underway. Nevertheless, the country's energy system is still largely ad hoc. The grid is composed of three isolated networks and supplies electricity to only 30% of the population. Only one of these networks is self-reliant (the Southeast Power System supplied by the Kajaki hydro-electric power station), the other two rely on imports predominantly from Iran and Uzbekistan. The majority of the population relies on diesel generators or has no access to electric power.



*Electricity Power Grid.*

*Over half of Afghanistan's electricity is sourced from neighbouring countries (predominantly Iran and Uzbekistan).*



*Kajaki Hydro-Electric Power Station.*

**547 Agriculture.** Agriculture is the major source of income for the majority of the population, 80% of whom live in rural areas. This sector represents 60% of total employment and typically accounts for one quarter to one third of Afghan GDP. Wheat constitutes roughly 60% of agricultural output, and is the country's most important licit crop. Favourable weather conditions produced a bumper wheat harvest in 2012, achieving levels close to self-sufficiency. However, the agricultural sector in Afghanistan remains highly volatile and dependent on snow melt, rainfall and the maintenance of a vast network of irrigation ditches and channels. Nevertheless, agricultural development is still Afghanistan's best hope of achieving sustainable economic growth.

*'Afghanistan needs to invest heavily in irrigation systems, new production and post-harvest processing technologies – measures that could increase the country's agricultural productivity, which is currently 50% below its pre-war level.'*

*Source: Afghanistan Economic Update (The World Bank, 2013).*

**548 Mining.** The mining sector, both hydrocarbon and extraction, has the potential to generate long-term employment and provide significant future revenue for the Afghan Government. Assessments of this sector by the US Geological Survey suggest that Afghanistan has in excess of US\$1.0 trillion in untapped hydrocarbon and non-fuel mineral deposits, including the world-class Aynak copper deposit and Hajigak iron ore deposit. Historically small and largely artisanal, the mining sector's share of aggregate output grew from 0.6% of GDP in 2010 to 1.8% in 2012. Full development of the sector, however, requires a favourable legal and regulatory environment to attract substantial foreign investment, which, in turn, is dependent on progress in security and enabling infrastructure. In the meantime, only a small proportion of Afghanistan's deposits are 'lootable' by insurgent and criminal elements (largely contained to gemstones and chromite deposits).

*In 2007, a 30 year lease was granted to the Metallurgical Corporation of China (MCC) in a deal worth US\$3.0 billion to develop a copper mine at Mes Aynak ('little copper well' in Dari) in Logar Province – estimated to be the world's second largest copper deposit. Once fully operational the World Bank estimates this large-scale mining venture could create 4,500 direct, 7,600 indirect and 62,500 induced jobs, and generate approximately US\$250 million in annual revenue.*

## COUNTER-NARCOTICS

The UN estimates that nearly 80% of the income from the narcotics industry goes to traffickers and processors and not farmers.

A contributory factor to the increase in Afghan opium production is the way in which dealers purchase the crop from farmers, particularly in the more volatile and insecure areas. Often dealers will contract to purchase the entire crop and provide sizeable cash deposits to farmers prior to planting. Dealers will also arrange to collect the harvested product directly from the farm gate. This process significantly reduces the risks incurred by the farmer; from crop failure, the threat of eradication, and in transporting the product over insecure roads. While the profit margins on conventional and illicit crops may be broadly similar, conventional crops are often stolen by criminals or taxed by corrupt policemen on the way to market. This erodes the economic viability of licit crops and substantially increases the financial and personal risks inherent in this form of agriculture.

Accordingly, the international community is taking a more effective approach to countering narcotics production by offering more competitive, less risky alternatives, based on an understanding of the value chain for agricultural production in Afghanistan. This approach identifies the steps between growing the crops and selling them in the market place. Its objective is to reduce the risk incurred by the farmer during different parts of the economic chain. In some areas this has increased the incentives for licit crop production through

contract purchasing of crops in advance of planting and arranging for their collection direct from the farm gate after harvest. The intention has been to make farmers perceive that licit agriculture is economically viable and entails less risk than growing poppy

*"Eradication raises the price of opium and the value of trafficker's inventories whilst devastating poor farmers, many of whom turn to the insurgency to find support"*

- US State Department

**549 Health.** Afghanistan continues to have some of the worst health indicators in the world, especially among people living in rural or insecure areas. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) one in 10 children die before the age of five, and one out of every 11 women die from causes related to child birth and pregnancy. Despite these grim statistics reports suggest that access to health is improving, with 85% of the population within one hour of a clinic.

**550 Education.** Improving literacy, skills and education is a key priority for fostering inclusive growth in Afghanistan. Only one in four Afghans aged 16 or above is able to read and write or has completed some formal level of schooling. International support to the education sector is focused on implementing the National Education Strategic Plan (2010-2014), with a focus on addressing shortages of qualified teachers and constructing school buildings. However, throughout the surge period insurgents continued to target the education sector which they saw as a significant threat in the propaganda war over alternative visions for the Afghan state. Teachers were routinely intimidated or assassinated and new school buildings were either left vacant or burnt to the ground in several key districts across the country.



Students attend the new Australian-funded Malalai Girls School in Tarin Kot.

### Winning Hearts & Minds?

**551** Development activities are aimed at reducing poverty. However, in Afghanistan development funding was also used to win the consent of the local population. The idea being that because insurgents and counterinsurgents are engaged in a contest for the support of the population, money spent improving the lives of locals would tip the balance in favour of the COIN effort.

*The key assumption behind using development projects to “win hearts and minds” is that underdevelopment is a driver of conflict. As a consequence, improvements in living standards through employment, infrastructure or service delivery will mitigate these drivers and help build support for the government.*

**552** Because development funding used in support of the COIN effort was aimed at reducing support for the insurgency, it follows that the bulk of these activities would be directed toward that segment of the population most under the influence of the Taliban. It also follows that projects would serve as propaganda – having an immediate and highly visible impact. As a consequence, the vast amount of international development funding was channeled into the insecure southern and eastern provinces and much of this designed to be spent on ‘quick impact projects’. Evidence has emerged, however, that rather than undermining support for the insurgency, this mode of delivery actually

increasing support for the insurgency. Throughout the surge period, development assistance may have “lost” just as many hearts and minds as it “won”.

### THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF AID

The relationship between aid and conflict is complex. Poverty can be both a cause and effect of conflict, and should therefore be addressed as part of a comprehensive approach to the problem. However, if delivered inappropriately, aid can also exacerbate conflict.

Aid given in the context of conflict introduces resources into situations that are politically and violently contested and will inevitably become part of the conflict.

Some of the negative impacts of aid include:

- Increasing incentives for violence by introducing a resource worth fighting over into an already unstable situation.
- Exacerbating tensions and creating winner-loser dynamics by benefitting some groups and not others.
- Generating a war economy that adversaries such as the Taliban can also benefit from by appropriating the proceeds or bidding for contracts.
- Substituting for local resources and thereby freeing them up for ongoing hostilities.
- Fuelling corruption in government and undermining confidence in legitimate leaders.

*“The problem of foreign aid exacerbated the situation because Popalzai (tribe) not only got all the power in government, but some also controlled and benefited from all the aid programs”*

*- Government Official, Uruzgan*



**553** The most oft quoted criticism of the role of development assistance during the surge was that it is fuelled massive corruption, which undermines any of the positive impacts it may otherwise have had.

*“Spending too much too quickly with too little oversight in insecure environments is a recipe for fuelling corruption, de-legitimising the Afghan government and undermining the credibility of international actors”.*

- Andrew Wilder (US Institute of Peace) & Stuart Gordon (London School of Economics)

**554** Other critiques included the fact that aid generated a war economy which malign actors such as the Taliban and corrupt government officials benefiting from disproportionately. That the prioritisation of insecure areas over secure ones led to perverse incentives whereby peaceful communities were penalised for their stability, and that propaganda objectives were undermining development best practice by focusing on immediate and direct assistance rather than building local capacities for communities to provide for themselves.

*“A minimum of 10% of the Pentagon’s logistics contracts – hundreds of millions of dollars – consists of payments to insurgents”.*

- US military official, Kabul

**555** In any event, population perception surveys and conflict assessments consistently highlighted the fact that the major factors fuelling support for the insurgency had little to do with under-development. Instead one of the primary reasons given by Afghans was the endemic corruption within the government, making the Taliban an increasingly attractive alternative. Other drivers of conflict included, fear of immediate reprisals, a sense of inevitability about Taliban success in the years following transition and withdrawal and lack of access to an effective justice system (which the Taliban exploited by providing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms).

*“Lack of clinics, schools and roads are not the problem. The main problem is we don’t have a good government”.*

- Paktia Tribal Elder

**556** Whilst roads, schools and hospitals are important for improvement in the living standards of Afghans, they rarely serve to generate a ‘hearts and minds’ effect. Instead, the international community would be better advised to channel consent winning activities toward the drivers of conflict at a local level. Whilst every district is different, these may include projects designed to strengthen district-level governance, increase access to the justice system and counter Taliban intimidation tactics.

#### THE DISTRICT STABILITY FRAMEWORK (DSF)

The DSF emerged during the surge period as a joint USAID-ISAF planning, programming and evaluation system designed to support ‘consent winning’ projects targeting the actual sources of instability at a local level. The framework was first developed and trialed by US forces and agencies in RC(E). US Ambassador Eikenberry and GEN Petraeus mandated that all USAID field personnel and military units be trained in the DSF prior to arrival in Afghanistan. Further, US PRTs were unable to access CERP funding without demonstrating that their proposals were generated through the application of the DSF.



## Reconciliation & Reintegration

*War is a contest over the terms of an ultimate political settlement.*

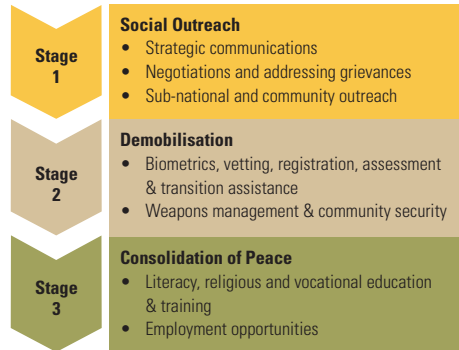
**Reintegration** refers to the demobilisation and assimilation of low to mid-level insurgents back into their communities.

**Reconciliation** refers to high-level peace talks between the Afghan government and senior Taliban leaders, often mediated through a third party such as Saudi Arabia or Qatar.

**557 Reintegration.** The goal of the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) is to establish a political mechanism that facilitates insurgent removal from the battlefield. Efforts at reintegration, however, have had limited success. Initial moves were made by President Karzai during his 2010 inauguration. These were followed by the National Consultative Peace Jirga (June 2010) attended by over 1,500 delegates, and the subsequent appointment by Karzai of the 70 member High Peace Council (HPC).

**558** The HPC and Joint Secretariat (JS) work with Provincial Peace Committees (PPCs) and Provincial Joint Secretariat Teams (PJSTs) to manage the APRP, which operates in almost all of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. As of July 2012, 6,277 former insurgents had walked off the battlefield and were enrolled in the program. The APRP consists of three stages: Social Outreach, Demobilisation and Consolidation of Peace.

- **Social Outreach.** Outreach involves building awareness of the APRP through social networks with ties to insurgent groups. The aim is to begin a dialogue with local fighters to overcome distrust, scepticism and concerns about the security and livelihoods of fighters.
- **Demobilisation.** When an insurgent agrees to reintegrate he commences demobilisation.



*The Afghan Peace & Reintegration Process.*

Transition involves vetting, registration, biometrics collection and the surrender of heavy weapons (reintegreees may retain their personal weapons). It may also involve security assistance and the resolution of outstanding grievances.

- **Consolidation of Peace.** The APRP is designed to benefit the host community from which the insurgents belong, not just the reintegreees, through Community Recovery projects. What is delivered to each community differs depending on need and available resources.

*63% of the Afghan population supports the reconciliation and reintegration process according to The Asia Foundation 2013 survey.*

**558 Reconciliation.** The assassination of Berhanuddin Rabbani, a former President and Chairman of the High Peace Council, in September 2011 demonstrated Taliban disdain for the reconciliation process and underscored their belief that the longer the conflict is drawn out the better their bargaining position will become. Rabbani was one of the few individuals with the stature to persuade former Northern Alliance commanders to trust the Taliban and embark on reconciliation discussions. His loss dealt a significant blow to any hopes of a negotiated solution.

**559** Since Rabbani's assassination negotiations between the major parties have been proposed



and subsequently stalled multiple times. Claiming that the country's sovereignty had been violated, President Karzai refused to participate in proposed negotiations in December 2011 after it emerged that the US and Taliban had met secretly four times to thrash out the details of a deal. Eighteen months later proposed peace negotiations between the US, Afghan government and senior Taliban interlocutors broke down once again amid the fanfare of the opening of a Taliban political bureau in Doha, Qatar. Both the US and Afghan government criticised the bureau and demanded the removal of the Taliban flag and name plaque which bore the inscription of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. As a precursor to resurrecting the stalled talks, the Afghan government has insisted that the office be used solely for negotiations with the High Peace Council and that it must not become a venue for the Taliban to present themselves as an alternative to the Afghan government or a government-in-exile.



*Qatari Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs Ali bin Fahd al-Hajri (right) and the Taliban's office spokesman Mohammed Naim (centre) speak during a joint press conference at the opening ceremony of the new Taliban Political Office in Doha, 18 June 2013.*

**560** Undoubtedly the most complex actor in the Afghan conflict, Pakistan's support for the Haqqani network and other Afghan insurgent groups has served to prolong the war, now into its second decade. Preferring conflict and instability in Afghanistan over a stable but pro-Indian Government, Pakistan's strategy in the region has been to provide variable levels of support to all sides in an effort to remain relevant until such a time that

it can secure a friendly regime in Kabul. That said, with the failure of the Doha process it has been Pakistan that has made the most significant move forward with the release of Mullah Baradar and the subsequent hosting of members of the Afghan High Peace Council.

### THE MULLAH BARADAR INCIDENT

Following a breakthrough in negotiations during a summit hosted by British Prime Minister David Cameron in October 2013, Pakistan agreed to allow a delegation of senior Afghan officials to visit Taliban co-founder and former deputy leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar.

Mullah Baradar, a long-time friend of the reclusive Taliban leader Mullah Omar, was the Taliban's deputy leader and one of their most influential commanders until he was arrested in Pakistan in 2010. At the time of his arrest it was claimed that Baradar had been holding secret talks with the Karzai Government and that his capture by Pakistan served to stop any direct negotiations between Afghanistan and the Taliban that would deprive Pakistan influence over an eventual political settlement.

However with transition approaching, Pakistan announced the release of Baradar (he remains in Pakistan under close supervision) and their intent to host a delegation from Afghanistan's High Peace Council, including chairman Salahuddin Rabbani, in an effort to restart peace talks.

*"An end to the fighting is the main aim of the Afghan people. Peace and reconciliation is at the top of our agenda. All of our countrymen who are not affiliated with international terrorist networks, can come home. We will welcome you home, we will help you, to stop the killing of my brothers."*

*- President Karzai, inauguration speech 2010*

## TRANSITION, WITHDRAWAL AND OPERATION RESOLUTE SUPPORT (2014+)

**561 Transition.** Phase IV (Transition) of the original NATO plan was effectively a phased plan for withdrawal: handing over responsibility to the Afghan Government in five tranches of territory beginning in March 2011, whilst simultaneously building institutions such as security forces and government ministries to take over from the coalition. Successful transition required that the ANSF, under effective civilian control, were operationally viable and capable of handling security challenges on a sustainable and irreversible basis.

**562** The model adopted for transition involved a three step process after which a given geographical area (province, district or municipality) would enter into one of five successive tranches. The first step was a conditions-based assessment, managed by the Assessment Working Group (AWG), to determine which districts areas meet the criteria for transition. Second, assessments were reviewed by the Joint Afghan NATO Inteqal Board (JANIB), who ratify the assessment of the AWG. The final stage was formal acceptance by the Afghan Cabinet, culminating in an initiation announcement by President Karzai, detailing the areas that have entered into transition.

**563** Transition was a variable geometry process, with areas proceeding through transition on different timelines (or even regressing) based on demonstrated improvement in security, governance and the rule of law, and increased proficiency of the ANSF. Ranging from 12 to 18 months, the process consisted of four distinct stages, during which the role of ISAF progressed from supporting the ANSF at the tactical, to the operational and, finally, strategic or national level. A challenge to transition, however, remains the time lag between the start of transition in an area and the supporting governance and development required to ensure the irreversibility of the process.

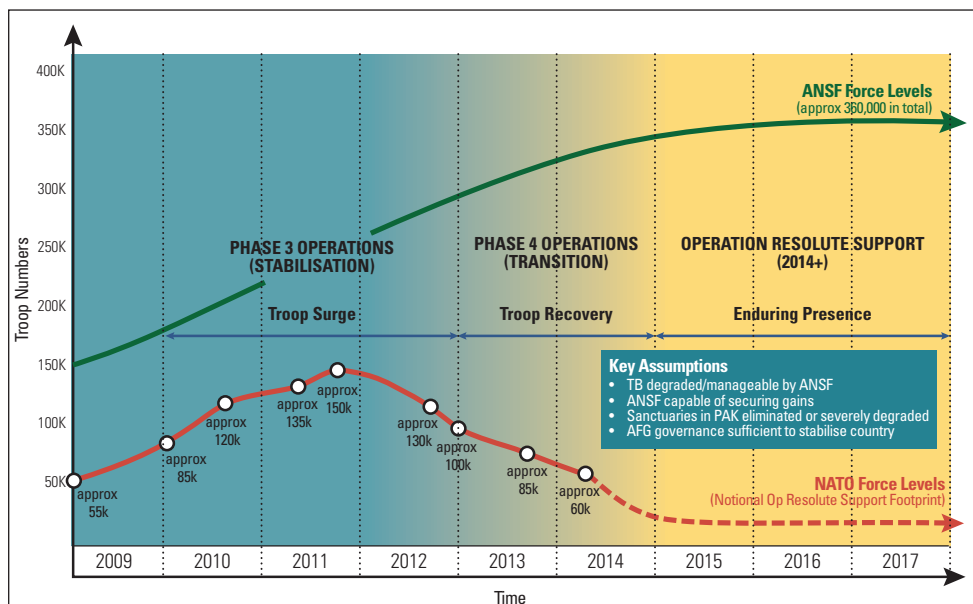
**564 Withdrawal.** On 18 June 2013 the conflict in Afghanistan moved into a fundamentally new

phase following the announcement of Transition Tranche 5 and "Milestone 2013". For most of the past decade the US and its coalition partners had led the COIN campaign against an insurgency that was described as resilient and adaptive. However, from mid 2013 Afghan forces took responsibility for security across all 34 of the country's provinces. Accordingly ISAF's primary focus shifted from combat operations to training, advising and assisting the ANSF in their efforts to hold and build on the gains enabled by the 2010-13 troop surge. Coinciding with transition, ISAF troop contributing nations have recovered most of their surge forces and the majority of bases have been transferred to the ANSF or deconstructed.

**565 Ongoing Assistance.** Despite the success of the transition timetable, the ANSF still lacks the ability to sustain operations and will require ongoing security force assistance well beyond the conclusion of the ISAF mission. Around 10 states, including Australia, have expressed interest in contributing to a post-2014 NATO mission, provisionally entitled Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT, aimed at C2, logistics, ISR, Special Forces and developing a capable Afghan Air Force. The US will be the largest contributor, with geographic responsibility for the east and south of Afghanistan. Germany and Italy will retain responsibility for the north and west of the country respectively. And Turkey will retain responsibility for the capital region. The concept of operations for Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT is to have Command Advisory Teams (CATs) plugged-in at regional ANSF Corps level headquarters, with the ability for mobile teams to reach a brigade in the provinces if necessary.

**566 2014-15 Elections.** In addition to security, significant economic, governance and political challenges continue to cast doubts over the long term prospects for stability in Afghanistan. The April 2014 Presidential (and Provincial Council election will be seen as a critical strategic event. These will be followed in 2015 by National Assembly elections. The presidential election, in particular, presents an opportunity for the Afghan

government to demonstrate its ability to conduct a peaceful democratic transition of political power, as President Karzai completes his second and final constitutional term as head of state. However, the election will also challenge Afghan Government institutions, such as the IEC and the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC), to conduct an election that is perceived by the Afghan people and international community to be credible, transparent and inclusive.



ISAF & ANSF Troop numbers.

## Chapter 6 – Afghan National Security Forces

- Development of the ANSF
- Afghan National Army
- Afghan National Police
- Afghan Air Force
- Working with the ANSF



**601** The Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) comprises three principal components: the Afghan National Army (ANA), the Afghan National Police (ANP), and the

Afghan Air Force (AAF). Within these services, specialist elements round out the country's security capabilities.

**602** The international community's long term objective is to build the ANSF into a force able to provide for Afghanistan's internal and external security needs. To this end, the ANSF must be nationally respected and ethnically balanced. It must be under civilian control, well organised, trained and equipped to meet the security needs of the country, and increasingly, it must be funded by the Afghan Government.

### FUNDING THE ANSF

As of August 30, 2013, the US Congress had appropriated nearly US\$54.3 billion to support the ANSF. Most of these funds (US\$52.8 billion) are earmarked for the US Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF), which provides the bulk of the resources to train, equip and sustain the ANSF and the Afghan Local Police (ALP). Other UN member states provide funding for the ANSF through the NATO

ANA Trust Fund and the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA). The Afghan Government and international donors agreed at the 2012 NATO Chicago Summit to an annual budget of US\$4.1 billion to sustain the force after 2014. Afghanistan will initially provide US\$500 million of that sum, rising annually through the 'decade of transformation' to 2024, when the Afghan Government will have full responsibility for funding its own security forces.

Annual Cost of Fielding Individual ANSF Members (based on FY2011 figures):

- ALP guardian: US\$8,000
- ANP patrolman: US\$33,000
- ANA soldier: US\$48,000

*Source: Report on Progress Toward Security in Afghanistan, July 2013.*

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANSF

**603** Development of the ANSF was for a long time plagued by a lack of clear direction and inadequate resourcing. Difficulties were compounded by a failure to recognise that there was a growing insurgency, and lack of clarity about the role the ANSF should play in combating it. As a consequence, for much of the past decade, the ANSF has played a subordinate role to ISAF forces, with the ANA being treated as a source of auxiliary troops. Similarly, unrealistic expectations about the ANP's role in COIN operations have hampered the development of the police and distracted from efforts to address longer term systemic corruption issues.

**604** In December 2009, President Obama articulated what he saw as a key US and NATO objective: to strengthen the capacity of Afghanistan's security forces and the Afghan government so they can take lead responsibility for Afghanistan's future. Following on from this statement of intent, in January 2010 responsibility

for developing the ANSF was placed under the overall command of a new three star ISAF subsidiary headquarters, NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan (NTM-A).

**605** Since its establishment in 2010, NTM-A has been working towards the end-state of an enduring indigenous security sector that is capable of generating and sustaining army, police, air, medical and logistics capabilities, with continuing leader development systems that professionalise the force. The initial focus was on the rapid growth of the ANSF, followed by the development of enablers, and later, professionalisation of the force.

**606** The ANSF end-strength at full operational capability will number 352,000; with 195,000 ANA and 157,000 ANP respectively. This force size is deemed necessary to complete transition by December 2014, and to mitigate the effects of the coalition draw down.

**607 ANSF Summary (circa 2014).** The ANSF is in the operational lead for security across Afghanistan following the announcement of Transition Tranche 5 in June 2013. Local forces are bearing the brunt of the COIN effort in Afghanistan, however, they lack the critical ability to self-sustain. In addition to generous budget support from the international community, the ANSF will require substantial coalition security force assistance extending well beyond the end of the ISAF mandate. Moreover, the ANSF are still heavily reliant on the ISAF for close air support (CAS), medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), airlift, logistics, medical support and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR).

**608** In addition to shortfalls in key combat enablers, the ANSF have significant weaknesses at the ministerial level. The coalition has assessed that neither the Afghan Ministry of Defence (MoD) nor the Ministry of Interior (Moi) are capable of fully independent operations and are unlikely to be prior to the end of the ISAF mandate. Both ministries experience significant deficiencies in personnel policy, budget execution and planning capabilities. In addition, these highly-centralised bureaucracies

are tainted by corruption, and riven with ethnic and political factionalism.



*ANA cadets practice drill on the parade grounds at the Afghan National Defence University in Kabul. The university equips and trains future ANA officers.*

**609 ANA and ANP Relations.** Whereas the ANP represents the force which will eventually be tasked with the protection of the population, their integration with the ANA into a coherent ANSF is currently limited. Differences in recruitment, equipment, motivation and overlapping responsibilities have tended to limit the willingness of the ANA and ANP to interact. The ANSF's ability to conduct basic coordination and communication between its various arms is challenging, but has improved with the coalition's focus on developing a joint planning capability through the Operational Coordination Centres at both a Provincial (OCC-P) and Regional (OCC-R) level. Nevertheless, intelligence sharing between the ANA and ANP remains problematic.

## AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

**610 History.** The ANA was created by NATO as part of a suite of interim governance arrangements set up following the overthrow of the Taliban. The initial goal was to develop a full military capability by 2010, including five Army Corps and one Air Corps. This goal has been changed a number of times with the current aim being to develop a 195,000 strong military by Dec 2014.

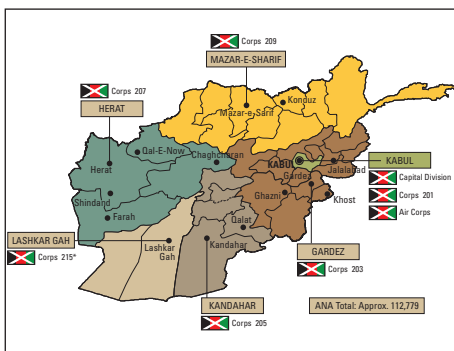
**611** Recruitment has been on a voluntary basis to create a professional army. According to the Constitution of Afghanistan, the President is

the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, but in reality he is a figurehead, dispensing general direction through the MoD and the ANA General Staff. His real authority over the military exists in the power to appoint and retire senior military officers.

**612** Unfortunately, since its inception in 2002 development of the ANA has been under-resourced. The expansion of the insurgency over this time has further disrupted development and degraded the force. Yet despite this adequate donor funding only began to appear in 2008, along with a slow increase in the number of international troops assigned to mentoring roles. The guidance for the ANA to transition to security responsibility by the end of 2014 was issued in late 2009, when the ANA finally became a full partner to ISAF.

**613 ANA Organisation.** The ANA operates from six regional commands as follows:

- 201st Corps – Kabul;
- 203rd Corps – Gardez;
- 205th Corps – Kandahar;
- 207th Corps – Herat;
- 209th Corps – Mazar-e-Sharif
- 215th Corps – Lashkar Gah



ANA Regional Commands.

Other major components include the 111th Capital Division (Kabul) and ANA Special Operations Command (ANASOC) (Camp Morehead, Wardak Province). Each Corps or Division is broken into brigades whose battalions (called kandaks) form the 600 man basic unit.

### MOBILE STRIKE FORCE

In 2013 the ANA began to field Mobile Strike Force (MSF) kandaks, representing a significant improvement in capability. These motorised combined arms units use mobility and firepower to find, contain, engage and destroy the enemy. Under the direct control of the Ministry of Defence, MSF kandaks serve as regional quick reaction forces to support ANA corps commanders, the ANP and civil authorities.

**614 ANA Training.** NTM-A has the primary responsibility for training the ANA. Formal training for enlisted personnel takes place at the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC) and other affiliated training facilities. Commissioned officers are trained at National Military Academy of Afghanistan (NMAA), the Afghan National Army Officer Academy (ANAOA) and the Command and General Staff College (CGSC). Work is underway to co-locate these establishments within the new Afghan National Defence University on the outskirts of Kabul.

**615** Recruit training utilises a NATO template and consists of an eight-week (reduced from nine weeks in March 2013) initial training program – Basic Warrior Training (BWT) – focusing on basic soldier and infantry skills such as weapon handling, shooting, tactics, guard duty, land navigation, first aid, mines, and prisoner processing.





*ANA recruits place their hands on the Holy Koran during the oath ceremony of Basic Warrior Training.*

**616** Upon graduation from the BWT and subsequent Consolidated Fielding Centre programs, suitably qualified soldiers go through the Advanced Combat Training program, developed by KMTC. This program focuses on the three types of kandaks in each ANA infantry brigade: combat arms, combat support and combat service support. The course lasts for six to eight weeks and focuses on such areas as heavy weapons, field artillery, logistics, reconnaissance, medical, engineering and maintenance. NCO aspirants are selected on the basis of leadership skills demonstrated when performing with their kandaks during field operations.

**617 Security Force Assistance (SFA).** The operational development of fielded ANA units and formations is the responsibility of ISAF Joint Command (IJC). A combination of coalition force reductions from 2012 and implementation of the SFA concept, that calls for specially tailored advisor teams – known as SFATs – to train, advise and assist local forces, has shifted ISAF operations away from a partnering relationship to an advisory role. As the ANA has developed, the main focus of SFAT activity has moved from the kandak level, to the Brigade level and then Corps level. The level of SFAT support varies and depends on a range of factors, including: ANA unit/formation capability, local threat/security levels, impact on campaign success (according to the key terrain district structure), and stage of security transition in the area. At the end of 2013 there were fewer than 200 ISAF SFATs.



*A U.S. Army Staff Sgt. identifies the impact zone to an Afghan Brigadier during a mortar live-fire training course in Laghman Province, Nov 2013.*

**618 ANA Equipment.** The ANA is being equipped with NATO standard light weapons, including the M16 and C7 assault rifles. Its anti-armour capability includes SPG-9 recoilless rifles and intimate indirect fire support with 82 mm mortars. Each brigade is also equipped with eight Warsaw Pact D-30 howitzers.



*Soldiers from the ANA 203rd Corps are trained in 60mm mortar systems.*

**619 ANA Manning.** As the ISAF mandate entered its final year in 2014, the ANA had achieved 95% of its fielded end strength objective of 195,000, reaching approximately 185,000 members (including 6,616 Afghan Air Force personnel). However, high levels of attrition within the ANA remain a significant challenge. Monthly attrition rates for 2013 reached as high as 4.1% (January 2013), and are generally well in excess of the ANSF monthly attrition target of 1.4%. High attrition is undermining attempts to develop a trained and



experienced cadre of NCOs and soldiers and places significant strain on recruiting structures.

**620** Previous coalition failure to assess and assist in the development of ANA recruitment and retention processes have resulted in significant problems in the areas of pay, privileges, leave, medical benefits, facilities and equipment. These problems have led to widespread low morale and very low levels of soldier retention, both of which undermine the development of a sustainable force capable of independent operations after the ISAF drawdown. Recognising these issues, NTM-A has focused on qualitative improvements in leadership, marksmanship and literacy.

### ANSF LITERACY TRAINING

Literacy is the foundation of professional military and police forces. A major coalition focus is on raising ANSF literacy standards. In January 2013, NTM-A met its goal to have 50,000 ANSF members achieve functional literacy. As of April 1, 2013, 73,727 ANSF members were in some form of literacy training.

- Level 1. The ability to read and write a single word, count up to 1,000, and add and subtract whole numbers.
- Level 2. An individual can read and write sentences, carry out basic multiplication and division, and identify units of measurement.
- Level 3. An individual has achieved functional literacy and can identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials.



*ANSF celebrates 100,000th graduate of the literacy training program, 28 July 2011.*

**621 ANA Assessment (circa 2014).** ANA growth brings with it the associated problems of inadequate experience, particularly if new units are raised in the context of high attrition rates from existing units. Recruitment and retention improvements have been partially brought about through a range of initiatives including pay increases, enhanced pay systems and mandatory literacy training (identified as a factor in why some individuals join the ANA), but leadership and mentorship through the earlier ISAF OMLT program and enhanced force protection measures have also played a role.

**622** These successes should not divert attention from addressing real problems within the ANA that will impact on the long term effectiveness of the force. As well as the problems experienced by any force that has experienced rapid expansion, there are soldiers' concerns about pay, corruption, promotion, inadequate facilities and equipment, problems in supporting families, vulnerability to insurgent infiltration, and a lack of meaningful compensation in the event of death or disability. These are the issues, more than ideology or nationalism, which will affect the ability to achieve and then sustain the required growth in size and quality.

**623** By the end of 2014, the bulk of the coalition enabler support will have been withdrawn, leading to capability gaps in critical areas including; C-IED, logistics, aviation support (CAS, MEDEVAC

and transport), medical support and ISR. If these deficiencies are not addressed by building functional indigenous systems and will impact on the ANA's capacity to provide security for the Afghan people, counter the insurgency and deter external threats.

### ANA SUMMARY

- The ANA is generally well-equipped, trained and led. The principal strength of the ANA is the infantry kandak, which has a proven ability to close with the enemy and fight at the Battalion-level.
- ANA Special Operations Forces (ANASOF) have attained a high degree of proficiency and are the most capable component of the ANSF. ANASOC is a Division-level headquarters for the Special Forces (ANASF), Commandos and the Ktah Khas kandak, and comprises nine Special Operations kandaks (SOKs) that combine Commando and ANASF Companies. Whilst ANASOF are heavily reliant on coalition aviation support they will integrate the 777th Special Mission Wing over the next few years.
- The current US Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) equipping strategy for the ANA is focused on providing 'move, shoot and communicate' assets. However, the ANA still suffers from equipment shortages in the following areas: medical, maintenance, mortars, night vision devices, communications, counter-IED (CIED)/electronic counter-measures (ECM) and basic artillery items.
- As coalition forces reduce their footprint in Afghanistan the ANA

must rely increasingly on indigenous systems. Development of the ANA logistics capability is a high priority for NTM-A, with key focus areas including fuel supply and the storage and delivery of equipment parts.

### AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE

**624 History.** During the Soviet intervention, the Afghan police were based on the Soviet model with a two-track system of career officers and short-term conscripts who served for two years as patrolmen as an alternative to joining the military. Officers were educated at a police academy; conscripts were untrained and often mistreated by their superiors. The police were militarised and included a light infantry force. However, during the subsequent civil war and the period of Taliban rule there was no national civilian police force in Afghanistan.

**625** By 2002, there were an estimated 50,000 men working as police, but they were untrained and ill equipped. Further, 70-90% were non-literate, and a significant proportion owed their allegiance to warlords and local commanders rather than to the central government. Many were former Mujahideen whose experience of acting with impunity prepared them poorly to serve as police in a democratic society. A few professional police officers remained from the ANP of the Soviet period, but their training and experience were also inappropriate for the new domestic order. Officials in the Afghan Interim Authority wanted to create a new professional police service with educated officers and trained career non-commissioned officers and patrolmen. However, for the first few years after the Bonn Conference militia forces were frequently transferred into the ANP, setting the conditions for criminal dominance of district and provincial forces.

**626 ANP Organisation.** The ANP comprises four principal police pillars under the direction of the Mol, in addition to specialised units, local police and security guards:

- **Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP).** The AUP are the general duties police responsible for the day-to-day policing activities at provincial and district level. The AUP is undergoing transformation from a paramilitary force to an effective community-based policing service that upholds the Afghan constitution, provides internal security and enforces the rule of law. Key challenges in the AUP are corruption and the abuse of civilians. AUP disaster and emergency response capabilities are at an early developmental stage.



*AUP officers stand in formation at the Police Training Centre in Tarin Kot, Uruzgan Province, 4 April 2013.*

- **Afghan Border Police (ABP).** The ABP is responsible for securing Afghanistan's vast borders (to 50 km inland) and the airports. The ABP mission is extremely difficult due to a persistent enemy threat and as a consequence of Afghanistan's extremely mountainous border terrain. The remoteness of border posts present challenges in fielding units and keeping them supplied. The ABP are consistently involved in corrupt activities such as the collection of illicit border revenues, pay-for-position schemes, smuggling and collusion with elements of the insurgency.
- **Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP).** The ANCOP was conceived in mid-2006 as a result of the inability of the AUP to respond effectively to the May 2006 Kabul riots. In urban areas the ANCOP are trained to counter civil unrest through the provision of a mobile rapid reaction force to support the AUP. ANCOP units are also located in high threat rural

areas and provide a police presence to establish and maintain security. Although the ANCOP are generally well equipped they lack sufficient C-IED equipment.



*An ANCOP Unit Practicing Crowd Control.*

- **Afghan Anti-Crime Police (AACP).** The AACP are responsible for counterterrorism, counternarcotics, police intelligence, criminal investigations, the major crime task force and forensics.

**627 The General Directorate of Police Special Units (GDPSU)** is a specialised component of the ANP that reports directly to the Mol. ANP Special Units are under the command and control of the GDPSU. Three National Mission Units (NMUs) – Crisis Response Unit (CRU) 222, Commando Force (CF) 333 and Afghan Territorial Force (ATF) 444 – have emerged over the past decade from ISAF SOF partnering arrangements. They respond to terrorist, insurgent and narcotics-related threats faced by the Afghan Government. These are supplemented by 19 Provincial Response Companies (PRCs).

**628 The Afghan Local Police (ALP)** is a village-based security force administered by the Mol and developed under the US Village Stability Operation (VSO) program as a mechanism for addressing the shortfall of ANP personnel, particularly in remote areas. Its role is the protection of local communities through defensive actions against insurgents and other anti-government elements.



*ALP recruits take part in a training session, December 2012.*

**629 Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF)** is a state owned enterprise under the authority of the MoI that was established by presidential decree to conduct all non-diplomatic, commercial, development, fixed site and convoy security services. The APPF is intended to gradually replace private security companies that currently provide these services. However, the coalition has assessed the APPF requires substantial attention to improve its core business performance. As of December 2013, the APPF comprised almost 20,000 guards at more than 150 sites.

## COMMUNITY POLICING

### Afghanistan National Auxiliary Police.

In late 2006, the United States authorised the creation of the Afghan National Auxiliary Police (ANAP). This was generated as a quick-fix effort to help address the growing Taliban insurgency in southern Afghanistan. Under this plan provincial governors could recruit 11,271 men from 124 high-risk districts in 21 provinces into the ANAP as a militia force intended to reinforce the ANP.

The purposes of the ANAP were to man checkpoints and perform community policing functions, freeing the ANP for counterinsurgency operations. Recruits received five days of classroom

instruction on the Afghan constitution, ethics, and police techniques and five days of weapons training. Each recruit was contracted for one year and given a Kalashnikov-type assault rifle, a standard ANP uniform, and paid a US\$70 monthly salary. A significant flaw in the program was that since ANAP members were locally recruited, they were vulnerable to factional control and manipulation.

Despite initial assertions that ANAP recruits would be thoroughly vetted, many were thought to be Taliban agents and nearly all were members of forces loyal to provincial power brokers.

The creation of the ANAP was widely criticised for reversing the effects of the 2005 Disband Illegally Armed Groups (DIAG) program, which disarmed and demobilised gangs that served local power brokers. In effect the ANAP served to reconstitute and legitimise tribal militias and groups loyal to powerful warlords. The ANAP was also challenged by regular ANP officers, who questioned why the ANAP received the same salary and wore the same uniform as professional policemen, but had far less training and did not owe allegiance to the national government. Some 8,300 ANAP members received training by July 2007, but incompetence and ineffectiveness of the force resulted in it being disbanded in May 2008.

### Afghanistan Public Protection Force Program.

Despite the failure of the ANAP program, the idea of creating village self-defence forces surfaced again in January 2009 in the form of the Afghanistan Public Protection Force Program. Members of

this force were recruited by tribal shuras (councils) to defend their villages against Taliban insurgents that had infiltrated their areas. The program began as a pilot project in Wardak province; a primary route for infiltrating insurgents and suicide bombers into Kabul. Known as Guardians, the first local recruits patrolled roads and communities in several districts.

The program was run by CSTC-A, which provided Kalashnikov rifles and two weeks of training by US SOF. Training included concepts related to the rule of law, respect for human rights, discipline, and military tactics.

Guardians received the equivalent of US\$100 per month, plus US\$25 for food. They were given radios and cell phones so they could call for backup from US troops if challenged.

The program has ceased to operate as a community policing initiative, instead shifting to a guard force model administered by the MoI. Today the APPF's core tasks are to protect key infrastructure, facilities, and personnel, with an ultimate aim to gradually replacing the private security companies that have proliferated in Afghanistan since 2002.

#### **Afghan Local Police.**

The latest version of community policing – the Afghan Local Police (ALP) – was established by President Karzai in August 2010, and has had much greater success than any of its predecessors. The ALP are the principal component of the coalition Village Stability Operations (VSO) program which is executed through the US Combined Joint Special

Operations Task Force (CJSOTF).

The ALP was formed as a means of addressing in the short-term the deficit in overall ANP numbers. It was initially envisaged that the program will run for two to five years, at which point AUP numbers will be sufficient to fulfill the roles being undertaken by the ALP. Under the ALP program, small, community-based self-defence units are formed under the auspices of the MoI, but are trained, mentored and equipped by US SOF OD-A teams, to provide protection for the community from interdictions by anti-government elements. The chain of command for the ALP at the district level runs to the district chief of police (DCOP).

Members of the ALP, also known as guardians, are recruited only from within the local community and can only operate within their home district. ALP units perform basic defensive actions (such as static checkpoints), operate only with light weapons, and do not have authorisation to act as a law enforcement agency unless expressly requested by the AUP. As ISAF enters its final year in 2014, the ALP numbered approximately 25,000 guardians and is expected to reach 30,000 by December 2015.

Determination of locations for ALP units is based upon an initial community request and then validation by the Ministry of Interior in conjunction with the coalition. The ALP program is designed to encourage community leaders through the local shura to be involved in the selection and vetting of guardians. In combination with the requirements for ALP personnel to only operate within their home district, this aims to make the ALP both

representative of and accountable to their local community. The coalition has instituted Village Stability Coordination Cells at regional and headquarters levels to monitor and coordinate ALP actions in conjunction with other village and district level activities.

Although considered a necessary part of coalition efforts to prevent anti-government elements gaining a foothold in communities, the ALP program nevertheless has potential weaknesses. Current training for guardians consists of only 2-3 weeks of basic training. Although oversight of the ALP is to be conducted by the AUP, ALP units are often raised in areas where there is limited AUP presence. Problems of corruption within the AUP have further hampered effective oversight of ALP activities. Tribal and ethnic concerns, which are present in other ANSF units, are of more significant relevance for the ALP which may become factionalised by local conflicts.

The ALP is heavily dependent on the US Government for funding (the US Department of Defense estimates that a 30,000-strong ALP will cost US\$180 million a year to sustain). Moreover, the withdrawal of US SOF and coalition conventional enablers poses significant logistical problems for the ALP. As a consequence, one of the primary challenges facing Afghanistan beyond 2014 will be how fund, demobilise or incorporate the ALP into other security structures. Anticipating this, the force has been structured to enable ALP personnel to move to regular ANSF units should the ANSF seek to expand into ALP sites.

**630 ANP Training & Mentoring.** Whereas ANA training has largely been a success, the same cannot be said for the ANP. Corruption, poor equipment, and infiltration by insurgents, warlords and drug traffickers, all lead to questionable effectiveness. Further, issues of leadership, drug use and illiteracy all affect the quality and effectiveness of the ANP. Crucially, the ANP are rarely trusted by the local population due to years of abuse at their hands. The coalition has been engaging in focused efforts to rectify these problems for several years with variable success.

**631** Initial Entry Training is intended for all ANP officers and is designed to impart the necessary basic skills to respond to the police needs of the community. This program replaced the various entry-level training regimes which had created significant problems in earlier years. There were dramatic disparities between certain branches of the ANP resulting from different approaches to initial training. All police officers will now share the same initial training, and after it is completed, will be eligible to take unit-specific and additional advanced courses. Current training capacity, however, is not enough to meet demand and many untrained policemen remain in the force.



*An ANP Colonel inspects recruits at Multinational Base - Tarin Kot in October 2013 prior to their eight week basic patrolman's course at Regional Training Centre – Kandahar.*

**632** The US and ISAF have employed Police Operational Mentoring & Liaison Teams (POMLTs) to train and mentor ANP units. Each POMLT was



composed primarily of military members who provide training support, maintenance, logistics, and administrative coaching to encourage professionalism, as well as serving as liaisons with international forces as required. The police training and mentoring objective was to send a POMLT to each AUP district, each provincial and regional headquarters, each ABP company and battalion, and each ANCOP company and battalion. Many POMLTs supported the Focused District Development program in training and mentoring district-level Afghan Uniform Police units. NTM-A and European Union Police (EUPOL) advisors, mentors and trainers now work with senior Mol leaders to help build a well-led, professional ANP.

**633 ANP Equipment.** The standard vehicle of the ANP is the four-wheel drive Ford Ranger provided by the thousand from the US. Other vehicles include diesel powered variants of the US consumer Nissan Frontier, Toyota and 4 wheel drives from Thailand, as well as Yamaha motorcycles donated by Japan. The ANP also has hundreds of tactical ambulances donated by the US. The weapons of the ANP include: Glock pistols, Smith & Wesson Sigma pistols, M9 pistols, M16 rifles, AK-47 assault rifles, AMD 65 assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenade systems.

**634** Uniforms and body armour remain widely mismatched and poorly distributed. Most police personnel are issued at least one uniform; however, it is common to find a wide array of blue, green and grey uniforms amongst the police due to different manufacturers. Some police officers have resorted to having their own bespoke uniforms. Body armour and helmets are only issued on an 'as needed' basis. The composition of equipment varies between US, Russian and Chinese military-grade equipment to third party equipment providing little to no real protection. Typically the ANP badge is worn on one shoulder and the Afghanistan flag on the other.

**635 ANP Manning.** As the ISAF mandate enters its final year in 2014, the ANP had almost achieved its fielded end strength objective of

157,000, reaching approximately 155,000 members. The ANP fares somewhat better than the ANA regarding attrition, with an average monthly rate of 1.3%. However, active targeting of the ANP by the insurgency undermines morale and recruiting efforts.

**636 Corruption.** Widespread corruption within the leadership and ranks of the ANP has long been a major problem in combating the Taliban-led insurgency. Insurgents of all levels have been able to quickly buy their release from police custody with bribes. Drug use and defections to the insurgency is also widespread. The level of corruption has resulted in decreased financial support on the part of international donors.

**637 The Future of the ANP.** Adequate ongoing support is crucial for the ANP to build on their progress, and to be successful in the future. This will need to be backed up by further and more sophisticated training conducted in Afghanistan and abroad through various bilateral programs to ensure ANP officers augment and hone their skills. Another area to be addressed is the ethnic and tribal composition of the force. This is a factor for both the ANP's internal dynamics and external community engagement. A more varied mix of ethnicities and tribal affiliations will allow the ANP to deploy more easily into certain areas and ease tensions across the spectrum. In addition, the police have found themselves carrying out duties more closely associated with soldiering in the battle against the Taliban. The ANP is undergoing a transition away from COIN operations to more traditional policing roles, but this varies from region to region. Part of the transition to rule of law policing was the abandonment, in March 2013, of police zones which attempted to create an ANP command structure similar to that of the ANA. As it stands, however, the Mol has very little control over provincial and district chiefs of police (PCOPs and DCOPs) due to poor communications and political interference in appointments.





*A member of the ANP squats while providing security as his team meets with local villagers during a dismounted patrol in Zabul Province.*

**638 ANP Assessment (circa 2014).** The ANP is currently meeting its growth targets, but there are continuing concerns about the quality of the force. To address these concerns, a series of programs have been instituted to improve recruiting, retention and attrition while also implementing initiatives to develop the quality of the force. These initiatives have included the establishment of ANP Recruitment and Training Commands, establishing Afghan-led Police Training Teams, improving pay and pay systems, adding literacy training to the basic training program, and embedding international partner units with the ANP.

**639** There are sharply varying levels of literacy, training, readiness and activity within the ANP, but overall the standards are generally poor. To counter this there is now mandatory basic training for the ANP. High levels of corruption remain, although much effort is going into addressing this through enhanced leadership, professional development, and improving transparency in promotion and posting. Attrition continues to be a problem for the ANP, but is generally below the 1.4% monthly ANSF target. Drug use amongst the ANP is also a cause for concern: marijuana use is widespread, and it is estimated that 10% of police recruits are rejected because of opium use.

**640** Most Afghans still see the police as one of the most corrupt institutions in the country. There are strong links between the high level of police corruption and the drug trade, with the drug lords bribing police and often putting their own men into senior police positions. Even honest police have difficulty operating in a force that is beholden to power broker interests – especially at the provincial and district level. Similar to the ANA, there are concerns about infiltration by insurgents into police ranks.

*The damaging legacy of corruption must be overcome by the ANP in order for it to be respected as a fair, legitimate and professional force by locals and thereby gain their respect and consent to enforce the rule of law throughout Afghanistan.*

**641** NTM-A's equipping strategy for the ANP, like the ANA, is focused on providing critical 'move, shoot, communicate' assets needed as it expands. The biggest improvement will be equipping the ANP with 3,500 up-armoured HMMWVs to replace the current unarmoured pick-up trucks. Again like the ANA, much effort is being put into developing the currently weak logistics system, and while progress is being made, it still lacks automation, infrastructure and expertise. These shortfalls are compounded by the lack of a national transport system and inadequate roads, making it difficult to get supplies to remote police districts



*An ANP officer enters one of the gifted Humvees.*

**642** The most serious brake on the development of the ANP is the weakness in Afghanistan's formal system of justice. While there has been investment made towards reform, infrastructure and training in this area, there has been little lasting progress. Problems include a lack of security for judges and prosecutors, an inadequate number of defence lawyers, ongoing understaffing, chronic corruption, inadequate pay and the lack of a case management system. Policing is one part of imposing a rule of law in which the Afghan people can have confidence, and the absence of an effective justice system places a severe limit on police effectiveness.

**643** Despite improvements in recruitment and retention levels and better standards in equipment and logistics, overall the ANP has made only measured progress in improving its capabilities. The Afghan population has little confidence in the ANP, and consequently those illicit networks which challenge the central government continue to thrive. A shortage of officers and NCOs across the ANP, compounded coalition draw down, is limiting improvements in quality.

#### ANP SUMMARY

- The ANP is achieving personnel growth targets, but success in improving quality is limited. The ANP is implementing initiatives to improve force quality as well as recruitment and retention, but progress is slow.
- Training standards vary but are generally low. Initiatives addressing pay standards and training levels are making some difference to force quality. However, drug use and corruption remain very serious problems.
- Equipment is slowly improving, and protected mobility will be enhanced through the provision of HMMWVs.

- There is slow progress in logistic capability, but it is hampered by a poor state infrastructure and transport network to supply outlying police districts.
- The absence of effective rule of law institutions is a serious issue for the ANP.
- Overall, the ANP has made only measured progress since its inception.

#### AFGHAN AIR FORCE

**644** The Afghan Air Force (AAF), previously the ANA Air Corps, will not be mission capable until 2018. As ISAF enters the final year of its mandate in 2014, the overall strength of the AAF was approximately 6,500 personnel. Current AAF inventory includes the following aircraft:

- 40 Mi-17 (multi-role helicopter)
- 11 Mi-35 (attack helicopter)
- 6 MD-530F (light helicopters)
- 2 C-130H (medium multi-role transport)
- 16 C-27A (tactical transport)
- 26 C-208 (light transport)
- 6 C-182 (fixed-wing trainers)

**645** The AAF provides Afghan forces with helicopter air support and reconnaissance capabilities. However, AAF fixed wing assets are very limited and plans to develop a Light Air Support (LAS) capability have been delayed. The AAF is currently being supplied with four C-130H transport aircraft that should provide a nascent inter-theatre lift capability. NATO has indicated the AAF is building to a strength of 8,000 airmen that will operate up to 140 fixed and rotary wing aircraft by 2018.

**646** The ANSF will be heavily reliant on foreign air support beyond 2014. Moreover, recruiting and training personnel to maintain the AAF's mixed fleet of Russian and Western-sourced aircraft is a major

challenge. Nevertheless, progress has been made with the AAF routinely performing autonomous Mi-17 resupply, CASEVAC, human remains, and passenger transport missions throughout Afghanistan.

## WORKING WITH THE ANSF

**647** Working alongside the ANSF can be both a rewarding and frustrating experience. Understanding both the local and organisational cultures are critical to understanding their motivations, concerns, and intentions; time spent learning the culture is never wasted.

**648** Security Force Assistance Principles. ISAF has learnt a considerable amount about training, advising and assisting the ANSF over the past decade. Here are some principles to consider when working with the ANSF:

- **Plan as a Team.** Planning should always be done as a team effort. Every operation should be jointly planned with the ultimate goal of ANSF commanders doing the majority of the planning. The best way for the ANSF commander to learn is by doing. ISAF leaders should allow him to do as much as he can on his own and accept his 'good enough' solution.
- **Learn Each Other's Language.** Teach English to ANSF soldiers and Pashtu/Dari to ISAF soldiers. Use the same key phrases/words that will contribute to the mission and enhance both partnering within the unit and interaction with the local populace.
- **ANSF Leads Locally.** ANSF should not only be present for all population engagements, but should be given the lead role. It should be the exception and not the rule for ISAF to be in the lead for any local populace engagement.
- **Let ANSF Build Relationships.** ANSF is the best human terrain mapping asset the partnered force has. Use ANSF as the primary agent to conduct human terrain mapping. They have a better understanding of the environment, culture, and society. Train ANSF soldiers

regarding what information they need to acquire from the local populace and help them understand the value in conducting this mission.

## TIPS FOR CULTURALLY SENSITIVE SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE

### DO

- Allow your counterparts to be the host. Go to their camp, barracks or training building. Allow them to open proceedings and offer food or drink. Play the role of guest trying everything that is offered and presenting a small gift in return for hospitality. Do not dishonour the hosts by upstaging them in the giving and receiving of gifts. The importance of this cannot be overstated. Hospitality (melmastia) is one of the primary Pashtun virtues and conveys dignity and respect upon your counterparts. Profusely thank the host at the end.
- Allow your counterparts to be part of the instruction process. When they speak expect them to take longer to get to the point than you. In Australia we want the "bottom line up front". However, in Afghanistan, context is everything and story-telling is common. Be patient and learn the Afghan way of fighting – they will probably understand more about local insurgent TTPs than you.
- Use applicable titles (engineer, doctor, sir, professor, etc) this confers honour on your counterpart, his family and qawm.
- Focus more on building relationships than conveying your message, especially in initial meetings. A bad start is difficult to recover from, so prioritise the observance of formalities and establishing trust before covering

your instructional material. Schedule follow up meetings for instruction.

- Expect to spend a seemingly disproportionate amount of time off topic, drinking tea, socialising and sharing stories. Do not show photographs of your own female family members.
- Practice listening and indirect inquiry over direct questioning. Use the technique of regular dropping of ideas into casual talk rather than long lectures.
- During multi-day instructional periods billet together where possible and share meals with each other.
- Use anecdotes, pictures and film and minimise the use of text (powerpoint slides and student handbooks). Many of your counterparts will be non-literate and by using text you will embarrass them. Literate counterparts can sometimes be identified by the presence of a pen/pencil in their shirt pockets (it is a status symbol).
- Hold classes of peers. If you hold classes of mixed rank, juniors will defer to seniors and you will not be able to generate broad participation. Similarly, a mixed ANA/ANP class is likely to result in lack of participation by ANP participants.
- When using an interpreter go through the material beforehand to minimise instances of mistranslation. Ensure that the interpreter introduces you correctly, focusing on your status (i.e. commander, professor, doctor, etc) to ensure respect.

## DON'T

- Never embarrass your counterparts by telling them that they are wrong, even if they are obviously incorrect. This is considered a slight and will undo the building of trusted relationships. Find a way of making your point without contradicting your counterparts.
- Avoid the use of acronyms, even basic ones. Whereas an Australian may ask what it means if they don't know acronym, an Afghan would prefer to stay silent to avoid embarrassment.
- Minimise finger pointing (which is seen as unnecessarily aggressive) and use an open palm (palm down) for gestures. Similarly don't point your feet in the direction of an Afghan (when sitting on the floor sit cross legged).
- Never give orders to any of your counterparts, regardless of their rank. Deal directly with the commanding officer when providing advice or direction. Always make joint decisions.
- Never look at the interpreter when addressing someone through them. Both you and your interpreter should maintain eye contact with the person you are addressing. If possible avoid wearing sunglasses. It is best to position your interpreter to your side and slightly to the rear.
- Do not schedule long instructional periods, or instructional periods after lunch on Thursdays or at any time on Fridays. Only conduct high-priority training during Ramazan. Your counterparts are likely to be fatigued and distracted during this time.

## INSIDER ATTACKS

### Understanding Insider Attacks

Although the first instance of an insider attack occurred in May 2007, the phenomenon only began to attract significant attention following the troop surge and a corresponding surge in partnered ISAF-ANSF operations. Whilst statistically small in number, insider attacks have now become a defining characteristic of the Afghan war and have had a significant negative impact on the ISAF mission. As of October 2013 there had been over 107 reported incidents resulting in 153 coalition forces killed and a further 222 wounded. 2012, in particular, saw a substantial rise in attacks, generating alarm within NATO troop contributing nations and threatening the success of the transition process.

Although the popular image of an attacker involves an insurgent “sleeping agent” or an ANSF member radicalised by contact with insurgents, official NTM-A figures suggest that the majority of insider attacks are unrelated to the insurgency. While insurgents claim credit for nearly all incidents, insurgent directed attacks (through infiltration or co-option) are thought to account for less than one in four (25%). In contrast, most attacks with known causes can be linked to antecedent grievances built up over time. Individuals tend to be radicalized as a result of specific ‘triggering events’ that turn latent grievance into a violent impulse. These include highly publicised cultural mishaps (such as the accidental burning of Korans at Bagram Airfield) or personal experiences of humiliation and disrespect.

That said, as a proportion of the total force, insider attackers are extremely rare. If, as a consequence of the actions of a few, all ANSF members were treated with suspicion the ISAF assistance mission would be severely compromised. More importantly however, both ADF and ISAF studies have shown that one of the most effective mitigation strategies against insider attacks is the establishment of prior bonds of trust and friendship which transform the ISAF member from ‘stranger’ to ‘brother’. ANSF members have often self-reported suspicious individuals to ISAF personnel whom they have established trusted relationships with.

### Australian Experiences

Despite being largely shielded from the phenomenon during the first 10 years of the war, insider attacks have now become the largest cause of ADF service deaths in Afghanistan in recent years. Since the first incident in May 2011, insider attacks have accounted for more casualties than all other categories combined. To mitigate the risk posed to ADF personnel, Defence have adapted force protection measures for troops interacting with Afghan security forces and increased counter-intelligence. The ADF also engaged DSTO social scientists to conduct multiple field studies into Afghanistan to understand the nature of the relationship between ADF force elements and their Afghan counterparts and provide enhanced cultural awareness training to all ADF units prior to deployment. In conjunction with reduced partnering and mentoring ratios, these measures have seen a significant decline in attacks with no incidents reported during 2013.



*Afghan troops feast with Australian and US soldiers whilst an Australian 'Guardian Angel' stands watch. One of the most effective mitigation strategies is the establishment of prior bonds of friendship through shared meals and other activities.*



## Part 2

### **Australian Assistance to Afghanistan**



## Chapter 7 – Australia's Contributions in Afghanistan, 2001-2014

- Background
- The International Coalition Against Terrorism (ICAT)
- Armed Reconstruction
- Stabilisation & Capacity Building
- Transition and Withdrawal

### BACKGROUND

**701** The Afghanistan intervention is Australia's longest ongoing military and civil-military engagement. More than 26,500 ADF personnel have contributed to Op SLIPPER: from 2001 to 2002, with the US-led International Coalition Against Terrorism (ICAT), and from 2005, supporting the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). In addition to the Afghanistan theatre, ADF personnel deployed on Op SLIPPER were also located at Headquarters Joint Task Force 633 and support facilities elsewhere in the MEAO, including crews of RAN frigates on station in the Persian Gulf. The total cost of the military operation for Australia since its inception has been A\$8.3 billion.

**702** Besides standing by its Alliance commitment to the United States, the stated aim of Australia's effort is to help bring security and stability to Afghanistan, and prevent it from again becoming a safe haven for violent extremist organisations (VEOs) such as al Qaeda and other transnational terrorist networks. Successive governments, from 2001 onwards, have advanced the pursuit of these objectives as the main reason for Australia's involvement.

**703** At the core of Australia's approach was the recognition that Afghans must take ownership of their own security. Accordingly, the key task was

the development of capable Afghan security forces whilst simultaneously establishing associated institutions, systems and enablers. In its simplest terms it was about managing the conflict and handing over to the ANSF the responsibility for leading operations.

**704** Whereas the formal transition process (inteqal) involved a security transition from international to indigenous forces, it had to be underpinned by progress in governance and development if it was to be sustainable. This required the ADF and Australian Government officials from a range of agencies to work together in a genuine civil-military approach that addressed the coalition's three major lines of operations: security, governance and development.

### AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN

Australia has been a long-term development partner of Afghanistan, delivering a program of humanitarian assistance throughout the chaos of the 1990s. The Australian Government's overall development objective in Afghanistan is to build the capacity of the Afghan Government to deliver basic services and provide its people with opportunities to earn a livelihood.

Australia's aid program to Afghanistan is a key element of an integrated whole of government effort with inter-linked security, diplomatic and development objectives. Since 2001, Australia has committed more than A\$900 million in Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Afghanistan. The government allocated A\$180.4 million in its 2013-14 aid program in Afghanistan, making it the fourth highest bilateral recipient of Australian ODA.

In delivering development assistance Australia seeks to work through Afghan Government systems, consistent

with the commitments undertaken by the international community at the 2010 London and Kabul Conferences on Afghanistan, and the 2012 Tokyo Conference. Australian aid is aligned with priorities set out in the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) 2008-2013, and in accordance with the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF). The Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) serves as the primary vehicle for delivering ODA.

In order to provide ongoing support in a range of areas beyond 2014, the Australian Government concluded a Comprehensive Long Term Partnership Agreement in the margins of the NATO Chicago Summit in 2012. The Prime Minister announced an increase in the Australian aid commitment to Afghanistan from an allocation of \$165 million in 2011-2012 up to \$250 million per year by 2015-2016. Since then Australia has developed a roadmap for development assistance post-transition focusing on education, rural development and financial and electoral management. In addition, we have signed an MOU with the Afghan Government pledging to channel 50% of development funding through Afghan systems and align 80% of assistance to National Priority Programs.



*An Australian Aid Worker meets with Dr Ajab Noor and chief Pharmacist, Mr Kikmat Ullah, at the Afghan Health & Development Service (AHDS) in Tarin Kot, Uruzgan.*

**705** There are broadly four phases to Australia's involvement in Afghanistan. These may be characterised as combat operations in support of the US-led ICAT (2001-2002 and 2005), armed reconstruction in support of the Dutch mission in Uruzgan province (2006 to 2009), stabilisation and capacity building in Uruzgan as a member of the US-led Combined Team Uruzgan (CTU) (2009-2013) and transition and withdrawal (2013 onwards). The two earlier periods were predominately military deployments in support of Australia's wider coalition interests and obligations, whereas the more recent commitments represent a move to a comprehensive approach to stabilisation incorporating security, governance and development assistance.



*Map of Afghanistan showing location of Uruzgan Province.*

## THE INTERNATIONAL COALITION AGAINST TERRORISM (ICAT)

**706** Australia became involved militarily in Afghanistan by committing the ADF to ICAT in response to the 11 September 2001 attacks against the USA. Prime Minister John Howard was in Washington on the day of the attack and immediately invoked the mutual defence clauses of the 1952 ANZUS Treaty — the principal security instrument that binds, separately, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. This was the first time that the Treaty had been invoked since it was enacted in 1952. On 17 September 2001 the decision was ratified by the Australian Parliament and by October a range of ADF elements were deployed

alongside US forces in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) with the declared intent of destroying the al-Qaeda network and driving from power the Taliban regime that had hosted it.

**707** ADF force elements deployed in Op Slipper during 2001 to 2002 included: an Army Special Forces (SAS) Task Group (SASTG); RAAF F/A-18 Hornet fighter aircraft, B-707 tankers and P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft with support elements; as well as a RAN maritime interception force already operating in the MEAO.

**708** By late 2002, however, the US had decisively shifted its focus from Afghanistan to preparing for a full scale invasion of Iraq as the second theatre in what was becoming described at the time as a global war on terror (GWOT). As a result, there were insufficient combat tasks to keep Australia's 200-strong SASTG engaged in Afghanistan and by November the government had withdrawn all but two military officers attached to the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) (Op PALATE) and the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre.

**709** It was not until August 2005 that Australia substantially re-entered the conflict in Afghanistan with another Special Forces deployment at the request of the United States, to help the fledgling Afghan Government quell a resurgent Taliban in southern Afghanistan. By that time, the coalition was conducting what was effectively a contested state-building mission. Australia's new commitment, as part of ISAF, was at the invitation of the Afghan Government and operated as a peace enforcement mission under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, backed by successive UN Security Council Resolutions.

**710** The Australian Government redeployed combat forces into Afghanistan in 2005 principally in support of the US Alliance. Sending discrete task-oriented force packages to Afghanistan was an efficient way for the government to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to the US. Australia derives tangible benefits from the Alliance such as

intelligence sharing and access to high technology military systems that help the nation hedge against strategic risk by maintaining a capability edge in an Asia-Pacific region currently undergoing transformational change.

**711** In addition to supporting our US allies, Australia's own security interests were also engaged. Afghanistan at the time was a key theatre in the so-called global war on terror and still had the potential for a regeneration of al-Qaeda as well as the transnational terrorist threat it posed. The government highlighted the linkage between violent jihadist organisations in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan — where some terrorists had learned their tradecraft in the 1990s. Most inimical to Australian interests in its near region was *Jemaah Islamiyah* in Indonesia whose members were responsible for killing and maiming scores of Australian citizens, among others, in terrorist bombings on the island of Bali in 2002 and 2005, and carrying out a targeted attack against Australia's Jakarta embassy in 2004.

## ARMED RECONSTRUCTION

**712** In 2006 the ADF Special Operations Task Group (SOTG), also known as Task Force 66, now deployed in Uruzgan Province, was joined in Regional Command–South (RC-S) by an Army Rotary Wing Group (RWG) consisting of two CH-47D Chinook medium lift helicopters and 75 support personnel based at Kandahar Air Field (KAF). This detachment was followed by a 400-strong Reconstruction Task Force (RTF), which commenced operations in Uruzgan in September of the same year. Over the next seven years, Uruzgan, a majority-Pashtun province in the south-central highlands of Afghanistan, would become a household name in Australia as the latest in a long list of Australia's overseas military deployments.

Unclassified



*Uruzgan's Provincial Capital, Tarin Kot.*

**713** At the time, deploying non-Special Forces personnel to an insurgent-dominated southern province was thought to entail significant risk. The RTF, therefore, was configured as a unique combination of engineers, mounted infantry and other enablers that allowed it to deliver soft power in areas where only hard power would dare tread. However, the RTF was not designed to be a stand-alone effort. Instead, it supported the Dutch Task Force Uruzgan (TFU) based at Camp Holland outside the provincial capital, Tarin Kot.

**714** The ADF worked in close partnership with TFU for four years until the Netherlands withdrew in July 2010. During this time the RTF became the flagship of Australia's contribution in Afghanistan. Its mission was protected reconstruction operations, focussing mainly on building security, health, education and road infrastructure. Two principal models of reconstruction were implemented by the RTF: 'delivered works' and 'managed works'. The former include a network of patrol bases and checkpoints constructed by Army engineers, whereas the latter involved contractors making use of local labour on various civil building projects. The RTF also helped build indigenous capacity in Uruzgan by establishing a Trade Training School. The school conducted basic courses in fixed steel and concreting, plumbing, construction and generator maintenance.



*Trade Training School (TTS) team members supervise carpentry student Hayatullah, during the last week of training at the school. The Australian-run TTS began during the first RTF deployment in 2006. Over the next 7 years Australian Army engineers ran more than 40 courses and graduated over 900 students. The school was formally closed on 16 March 2013.*

### THE RECONSTRUCTION TASK FORCE (RTF)

The RTF provided generally well-considered and meaningful assistance. However, using soldiers to deliver reconstruction in a setting as remote and insecure as Uruzgan was enormously expensive. From September 2006 to June 2010 the ADF accounted for a total of A\$252 million in ODA-eligible expenditure. However, only A\$37 million of that sum was spent directly on the extensive range of development and humanitarian projects undertaken by the ADF in Uruzgan. The remainder was the net additional cost of ADF personnel, support and other associated outlays.

The RTF underwent four rotations from September 2006 to October 2008. Subsequent rotations of ADF contingents in Uruzgan were renamed Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force (MRTF), Mentoring Task Force (MTF), and finally, Adviser Task Force (ATF), to reflect the changing emphasis of the ADF mission from reconstruction to security force assistance.



*RTF3 security elements watch engineers construct a culvert in the Dorafshan, March 2008.*

**715** Australia's deployment to Uruzgan was in support of the Stage 3 expansion of ISAF into southern Afghanistan. As a result of the ADF deployment to the most volatile part of the country Australia gained credibility among its senior coalition partners in ISAF. Many members of the NATO alliance appeared not only to be avoiding the southern region, but combat in general. Furthermore, the ISAF mission was impeded by coalition partners having differing political objectives and national caveats which kept many of their forces in the country but out of the fighting.

**716** The international intervention in Afghanistan prior to GEN McChrystal's appointment in 2009 remained largely an act of improvisation. The "small footprint" approach forced on successive Commanders as a result of the war in Iraq had failed to prevent an insurgency from engulfing the south and east of the country. In Australia the newly elected Labor Government, led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, began to express public criticism of the ISAF strategy. Although he has strongly endorsed the Afghanistan mission while in opposition, the Prime Minister and other senior cabinet ministers now expressed concern at the lack of progress, describing the coalition strategy as incoherent, and questioning the resolve of some NATO member states amid rising levels of insurgent violence.

**717** In 2008 the Australian Government began to place a new emphasis on security force capacity building when it announced that Australian soldiers would assume responsibility for mentoring a single Afghan National Army (ANA) infantry kandak. The

ADF-mentored 2nd kandak was part of the ANA's, Uruzgan-based, 4th Brigade of the 205th (Hero) Corps. Up to that point RTF training of Afghan personnel in Uruzgan had been limited to small groups of around 10 engineers. The decision to strengthen the ADF's training and mentoring role marked a major shift in the Australian commitment to come.



*PM Rudd expands Australia's mission in Afghanistan to encompass mentoring the 4th BDE of 205 (Hero) Corps.*

**718** Prime Minister Rudd also attached considerable importance to the need for coordination and integration of military and civilian resources in Afghanistan. By early 2008, it had become clear to the Australian Government that civilian specialists must also become involved in helping to progress the development line of operation in Uruzgan. Consequently, the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID, now DFAT) began sending individual stabilisation and development advisors to work alongside RTF personnel.

## STABILISATION & CAPACITY BUILDING

**719** In 2009 the Government recast its mission in line with President Obama's new strategy of defeating al Qaeda and denying the Taliban access to key Afghan population centres whilst disrupting and degrading their operational capability to levels manageable by the ANSF. In a major speech on Australian policy in Afghanistan, Prime Minister Rudd reiterated that the strategic denial of a sanctuary to transnational terrorist organisations (TTOs) who threaten Australia, its people and its interests as well as the Alliance commitment to the



United States were the fundamental issues at stake for his government.



*MRTF1 soldiers in an overwatch position during a foot patrol near Karakak north of Tarin Kot.*

**720** Three main elements outlined by Prime Minister Rudd underpinned Australia's campaign plan:

- **Strategic Denial.** First was the denial of the country as a training ground and operating base for al-Qaeda and other TTOs.
- **Stabilisation.** Second was the stabilisation of the country through combined civil and military efforts in order to consolidate the primary interest of strategic denial. Here Australia's contribution was limited to the stabilisation of Uruzgan Province.
- **Capacity Building.** Third was the provision of military, police and civilian training and mentoring, in concert with coalition partners, in order to hand over responsibility to Afghan authorities within a reasonable timeframe. Again, the bulk of Australia's capacity building contribution was limited to Uruzgan Province.

Successful implementation of the third element of the mission created the basis of Australia's 'exit strategy'.

**721** The operational requirements generated by Australia's new campaign plan and the 2009 Afghan presidential election altered the ADF troop-to-task ratio in Uruzgan. As a result, the government sent an additional 450 military personnel to Afghanistan. The additional contingent was made up of headquarters, logistics, engineering and mentoring staff, and also included a 120-strong

Election Support Force. Most of this contingent consisted of soldiers reinforcing the now renamed Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force (MRTF) which progressively assumed responsibility for partnering with and mentoring all 6 kandaks of 205 Corps' Uruzgan-based 4th Brigade.



*The ANA leads the way during a partnered patrol with MRTF1 in the Baluch Valley, Uruzgan, March 2010.*

**722** By 2010, the Australian government had increased its military support to the ISAF mission from around 1,090 to a new authorised ceiling of 1,550 personnel in Afghanistan — a number that remained unchanged until 2013. The main focus of the ADF mission became security force capacity building; an effort deemed critical to the success of the coalition's new approach. The ADF were later joined in Uruzgan by 10 Australian Federal Police (AFP) officers, from the International Deployment Group, attached as training advisors to the Dutch-run ANP Provincial Training Centre at Camp Holland under the AFP's Operation Synergy.

## POLICE TRAINING IN AFGHANISTAN

### The Australian Federal Police

The AFP presence in Afghanistan dates from October 2007, and has been primarily concerned with law and order capacity building. Initially two sworn officers were attached to the US-led CSTC-A in Kabul, with another two engaged in training and mentoring the Afghan Counter-Narcotics Police. By the following year the commitment had doubled in number, with officers also deployed to criminal intelligence and

strategic advisory roles within RC-S headquarters (Operation Contego). In July 2010, the various AFP operations in Afghanistan were drawn together into Operation Illuminate, which provided for the deployment of 28 officers engaged in capacity development at three main locations in Afghanistan, with a primary focus on Uruzgan.



*AFP Officer conducting training at the Police Training Centre in Tarin Kot.*

### **Special Operations Task Group (SOTG)**

In addition to the MRTF, The Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) provided specialised training and mentoring to an Uruzgan-based ANP unit, known as the Provincial Response Company (or Provincial Police Reserve).



*PRC trainees are instructed in compound clearance operations by their SOTG mentors at a purpose built facility in MNBTK.*

**723** Significantly, the government appointed former Secretary of Defence, Ric Smith, to the position of Special Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan to better integrate Australia's commitment with the international effort. His work was supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), which had the overall responsibility for coordinating Australia's whole of government response. Whereas Australia had established a small diplomatic presence in Kabul in September 2006, DFAT officers were only deployed to Uruzgan from July 2009. Their tasks included engaging with local political actors, mapping the 'human terrain' in the province, and reporting from post.

**724 Combined Team Uruzgan (CTU).** The Dutch withdrawal from Uruzgan in July 2010 marked a critical juncture for the Australian Government, which had consistently maintained that it was not in a position to assume the lead role in the province due to concurrent commitments in Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands. Although it was anticipated that the US would take over from the Dutch, the issue added a degree of uncertainty to Australia's military deployment. Not least of which on the agenda was continued access to crucial US enablers.

**725** In April 2010, the Australian Government announced a 50 per cent increase in its civilian contribution. By the end of the year there were roughly 50 Australian Government civilian employees located in Afghanistan — in addition to 10 Defence public servants. This substantially enhanced civilian commitment came about because of the transfer of command on 1 August 2010 from TFU to an ISAF-flagged multinational task force, known as Combined Team Uruzgan (CTU).

**726** CTU was a very different organisation to earlier coalition arrangements in Uruzgan. The task force centered on an Australia-US partnership, with much smaller contributions from Slovakia, Singapore and New Zealand. CTU was effectively one of five Brigade Combat Teams within the battle remit of a new US Army division-level headquarters in Regional Command South.



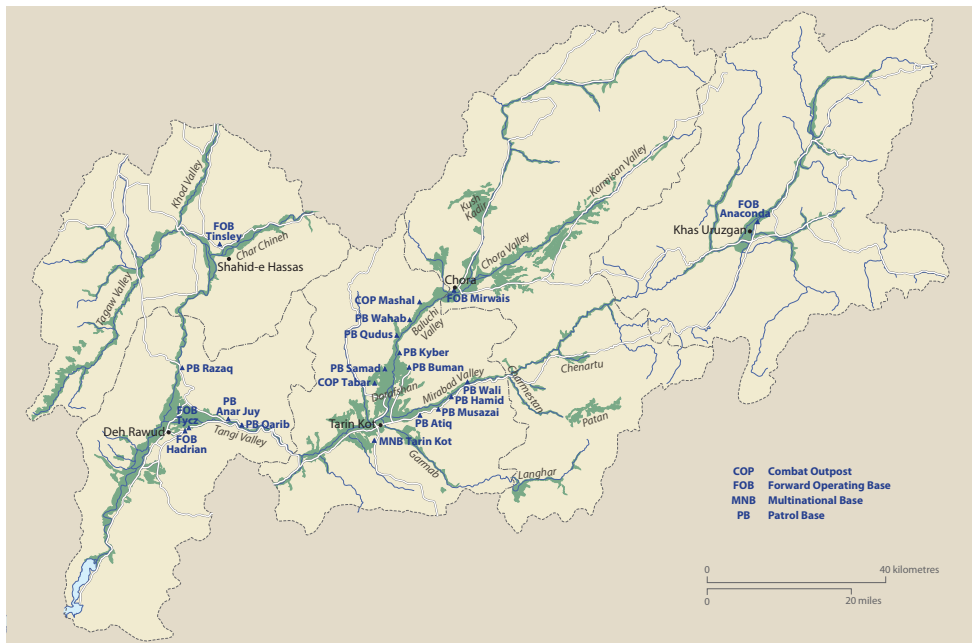
**727** Whereas CTU was led by a US Army Colonel (until Australia assumed command of the formation in October 2012) most of the principal positions at Multi-national Base Tarin Kot (MNB-TK) – including Deputy Commander CTU, Commander MNB-TK and Director of the Uruzgan Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) – were filled by Australian military and civilian officers. At its height, there were nearly 10,000 military personnel and civilians from seven contributing states stationed at the base.

**728** As a result, ADF force elements and civilian agencies in CTU were more integrated into the ISAF command structure than had previously been the case. They were able to draw on considerable coalition logistics, aviation support, ISR and other enablers, as they worked to stabilise Uruzgan, target insurgent structures, conduct security force capacity building, extend sub-national governance and create an environment conducive to development.



*2nd Mentoring Task Force (MTF2) Combat Team Charlie conduct a Community Engagement Patrol in the Tangi Valley, May 2011.*

**729** Successive ADF Mentoring Task Forces (MTF) guided the development of the 4th Brigade at the *kandak*, headquarters and provincial Operation Coordination Centre (OCC-P) levels. Individual MTF rotations were based on an infantry battalion with the inclusion of elements from supporting arms. Bringing about security transition in Uruzgan by raising the combat effectiveness of the 4th Brigade was described by the government as Australia's primary operational objective in Afghanistan — a task that was to be completed by mid-2013.



*Map of Uruzgan Province showing all ADF bases at the height of the Troop Surge.*

**730** CTU had far greater success in bringing security and stability to the province than its predecessor. The number of ANSF patrol bases doubled in the year following the Dutch withdrawal. ADF-mentored ANA elements extended their control along the crucial river valleys that connected Uruzgan's five districts. This enabled the expansion of development zones and the incorporation of previously isolated communities into the PRT-administered development program. Furthermore, a number of ALP sites overseen by US SF OD-A teams created secure pockets in the most isolated parts of the province where CTU had not established a permanent presence.

#### ADF FORCE ELEMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN DURING THE SURGE

Approximately 1,550 ADF personnel were deployed at three main locations in Afghanistan—Kabul City, Uruzgan Province and Kandahar Air Field (KAF). These included: HQ Joint Task Force 633 — Afghanistan staff stationed at Kabul International Airfield (KIA), a variety of staff embedded in ISAF HQ in Kabul City, staff embedded in the HQ of Combined Team Uruzgan (CTU), PRT Uruzgan support elements, a Mentoring Task Force comprising six Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams based at MNB-TK and various forward locations, a range of enablers (including Counter Improvised Explosive Device Task Force, Weapons Intelligence Team, Force Support Unit, Force Communications Unit, medical personnel in Role 2 Medical Facility at MNB-TK, and an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Detachment from the 20th Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment operating SCANEAGLE UAV), Special Operations Task Group based at MNB-TK, Army Rotary Wing Group operating two

CH-47D Chinook helicopters based at KAF, RAAF-led Heron medium altitude long endurance UAV detachment based at KAF, Combat Support Unit and a Joint Movements Coordination Centre detachment.

**731** Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Uruzgan was where Australia's civilian and military efforts were drawn together in Afghanistan. The interwoven strands of security, politics and development called for particularly close cooperation between the ADF and civilian officials, who had not previously attempted the type of political engagement and development activity that they were undertaking in Uruzgan.

**732** A senior DFAT officer, who also served as the ISAF and Australian Senior Civilian Representative in the province, directed PRT Uruzgan. This combined joint inter-agency body was one of the largest of its type in Afghanistan, staffed at its peak by up to 200 civilian and military personnel from Australia, the US and Slovakia. The ADF provided PRT Uruzgan with a Works Section and an organic force protection element known as the Other Government Agencies (OGA) Platoon. A US military contingent, also responsible for security, facilitated logistic support and movement.

**733** Three district-based and one mobile support team from the PRT addressed the stabilisation and development challenge. Each team included four to six Australian and US civilian specialists in governance, the rule of law, stabilisation, development and agribusiness.

#### AUSAID STABILISATION ADVISERS

The Australian Civilian Corps (ACC) deployed Stabilisation Advisers (STABADs) to work as part of the Provincial Reconstruction Team. The advisers played an important role in the coordination of district-level stabilisation

and development efforts. Focusing on collaborating with local Afghan leaders to identify community development needs as well as understanding and influencing political dynamics at the district level, the advisers also supported and assisted the Afghan government to plan and deliver essential services to the district in the key areas of health, education, infrastructure, and agriculture.

*Source: Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade*



*PRT Uruzgan hosts a meeting between the Stability In Key Areas (SIKA) regional advisers and their local Uruzgan staff counterparts (STABADS) at MNBTK, 17 July 2013. SIKA's mission is to assist government officials at the district and provincial levels to respond to the population's development and governance concerns.*

**734** Australian stabilisation (STABAD) and development (DEVAD) advisers assisted Afghan authorities to design and monitor stabilisation and development activities that were focused on the two vital areas of health and education, but were also concerned with growing the province's agricultural economy and building rural infrastructure. AusAID worked with international and local NGOs and multilateral partners to support the delivery of national programs into the province, which had been otherwise well down the list of the central government's priorities. AusAID also mentored provincial government officials to improve local administration and service delivery, and provided them with literacy and numeracy training.

**735** The preference for PRT officials was to target their efforts to where there were credible local partners and resources to work with. DFAT's responsibility for key leader engagement was important in this respect. Officials had to navigate a complex web of social and political relationships and, in contrast to the Dutch who shunned local power brokers with a dubious human rights record, chose to engage with whomsoever was willing to work with them to extend the capacity and legitimacy of the Afghan Government.



*Governor-General, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce, AV CVO joins a group of students at the Australian-funded Malalai Girls School in Tarin Kot, April 2012.*

## TRANSITION AND WITHDRAWAL

**736** In May 2012, Uruzgan and the associated Gizab District in Daykundi Province were included in Transition Tranche 3—the so-called 'stretch tranche'. Later that year the coalition assessed that all four of the 4th Brigade's rifle *kandaks* were capable of operating independently of their Australian advisers. Throughout 2013 ADF Security Force Assistance Teams (SFATs) concentrated on building functional systems to sustain the 4th Brigade and develop its ability to mount coordinated operations. This activity took place parallel to the retrograde that involved the deconstruction or handover to the ANSF of a network of Forward Operating Bases, Patrol Bases and other security infrastructure built by the coalition in Uruzgan.



*Commander 184th Security Force Assistance Team (SFAT), Uruzgan Provincial Chief of Police (PCOP), Commander Combined Team Uruzgan (CTU) and a member of the Uruzgan Operational Coordination Centre Provincial (OCC-P), during the sign-over of the Provincial Training Centre to the Afghan National Security Forces at MNBTK, October 2013.*

**737** Indeed for much of 2013, the Australian Government grappled with the logistical challenge of withdrawing from Afghanistan. Besides redeploying or otherwise disposing of 1,300 accommodation modules, 600 shipping containers and 275 vehicles, the government was mindful of reputational issues, the impact the long deployment has had on ADF capability, and the ongoing care of its many veterans.

**738** Newly elected Prime Minister Tony Abbott's visit to Afghanistan on 28 October 2013, marked the closure of PRT Uruzgan, bringing to an end Australia's efforts to foster development, and improve governance in one of the country's most disadvantaged provinces. The Prime Minister's hope at the Recognition Ceremony at MNB-TK was that local people would *"remember us with pride, as we remember our work here with pride"*. Australia's advisory support mission in Uruzgan officially came to end on 15 December 2013, when the final ADF elements of CTU withdrew from the province. A joint ISAF-Afghan 'independence ceremony' held at the former MNB-TK declared the ANSF in Uruzgan independent of coalition advisors.

**739** Nevertheless, Uruzgan is still a remote province in a poor country struggling with an entrenched insurgency. And whereas the province has seen significant human development, improvements are not evenly spread across all sectors or districts. As we approach the end of the ISAF mandate, the coalition remains connected to Uruzgan through a small liaison force based in Tarin Kot, and through national programs administered from Kabul. Ongoing progress will be contingent, however, on the security environment and the standard of governance – the responsibility for both of which now lies with the Afghan Government.

**740** Australia's intervention in Afghanistan saw it play the role of a cautious, though increasingly engaged member of ISAF for a range of reasons that were never selfish, but always in the national interest. Nonetheless, Australia's contributions to the ISAF stabilisation and counterinsurgency mission relied heavily on the resources of its coalition partners. Furthermore, it was not until late in the intervention that Australia realised the potential for, and began to implement, a whole of government approach. In this respect Uruzgan may have provided Australia as much as we have provided the province. By serving as a test-bed for a nascent civ-mil-pol capacity for assisting fragile and conflict-affected societies as well as the relief, reconstruction and recovery of communities following a natural disaster, the legacy of Uruzgan may live on in Australia and our Indo-Pacific region for decades to come.



*Newly elected PM Tony Abbott, Provincial Governor Amir Mohammed Akhundzada and the Director of the Uruzgan PRT at the ceremony to close MNBTK.*



*MAJGEN Craig Orme, Commander Joint Task Force 633, greets the last ADF personnel to leave Tarin Kot, as they disembark from a RAAF C-17A Globemaster at al Minhad Air Base (AMAB).*



## Chapter 8 – Australian Force Elements in Afghanistan 2014 onwards

- Command and Control
- Mentors & Advisors
- Component Contributions
- Enablers
- Other ADF Elements to Afghanistan

**801** Op SLIPPER involves not only military elements deployed to Afghanistan, but also forces dual assigned to provide command, communications and logistics support to the wider MEAO, including the Gulf of Aden (terrorism and anti-piracy operations).

### COMMAND AND CONTROL

**802 Current Manning.** From Jan 2011 to Sep 2013 there were approximately 1550 ADF personnel deployed within the borders of Afghanistan. In addition, there are approximately 800 ADF personnel deployed across the wider MEAO in support of operations in Afghanistan, the northern Persian Gulf, and Counter–Piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. Since Sep 2013 a progressive draw down of personnel has occurred to reach, approximately 400 personnel within Afghanistan, and a further 400 supporting the wider MEAO.

**803 HQ JTF633.** Headquarters Joint Task Force 633 (HQ JTF633) provides command and control of all ADF elements deployed throughout the MEAO. HQ JTF633 is located in UAE and provides enabling support and assistance to the Australian military presence. UAE support in hosting Australia's headquarters contributes to the international campaign against terrorism, as well as countering piracy in the Gulf of Aden, and providing maritime security in the region.



*JTF 633 Headquarters.*

**804 HQ JTF633-A.** Headquarters Joint Task Force 633 – Afghanistan (HQ JTF633-A), based in Kabul, provides specific command and control of all ADF elements deployed within the territorial borders of Afghanistan on behalf of the Commander Joint Task Force 633 (CJTF 633), as well as coordinating JTF 633's interface with the ISAF Headquarters and other agencies.

### MENTORS & ADVISORS

**805 Afghan National Army Officer Academy (ANAOA) Mentoring Team (MT).** The mentoring task at the ANAOA is to assist with the training and development of Afghan Army instructors at the ANAOA. There are approximately 120 mentors from the UK, New Zealand, Australia, the Netherlands and several other Coalition partners, with the UK taking the role as lead framework nation.

**806** The ANAOA is colloquially known by Australian Mentors as 'Duntroon in the Dunes', or by their UK counterparts as 'Sandhurst in the Sand'. Located on a 105 acre site in Qargha on the outskirts of Kabul, it is one three institutions which together form the new Afghan National Security University (the other two being the National Military Academy and the NCO Academy). Together, the three parts of the University will be responsible for the training and education of the ANA's future leaders, at every level.



*ADF personnel at the new ANA Officer Academy outside Kabul.*

**807 205 Corps Advisory Team (205 CAT).** 205 CAT Advisors, based in Camp Baker Kandahar, provide advice and training to the 205th Corps command and leadership team.

**808 Force Protection Element (FPE).** The FPE consists of three platoons of force protection based around a motorised infantry Company structure. Two platoons will be deployed with the third held in Australia on 21 days notice to move. The main task for the FPE is to conduct Guardian Angel and general force protection for Australian and Coalition mentors and advisors at the ANAOA and 205 CAT. Structured within the ANAOA FPE is a small Real Life Support element that will provide basic life support (supplies and maintenance and CIS) to the mentors based there.

## COMPONENT CONTRIBUTIONS

### Land Operations

**809 Special Operations Assistance Group (SOAG).** The SOAG's participation in Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT is to provide training and mentors at the Headquarters General Directorate Police Special Unit (HQ GDPSU). In support of the mentors is a force protection section. Australia also provides a number of Special Forces trained embeds to support HQ ISAF Special Operations Force.



*Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) Long Range Patrol Vehicles drive in convoy across the dasht.*

### Air Operations

**810 JTF 633 Air Component Headquarters.** The Air Component provides coordination and tasking support to HQ JTF633 for all aircraft and air combat support elements assigned to Op SLIPPER and Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT.

**811 Air Mobility Task Unit (AM TU).** The AM TU fly and maintain C-130J aircraft which provide intra-theatre air movement for AS and coalition forces throughout the MEAO and Afghanistan.



*The Last RAAF C-17A Globemaster to depart Tarin Kot for al Minhad Air Base (AMAB) on 15 December 2013.*

**812 Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) Detachment.** A small element is co-located with the MEAO CAOC. This detachment provides important information and liaison duties to enable ADF air operations throughout the MEAO.

**813 Combat Support Unit (CSU).** The CSU is comprised of combat support personnel who look



after the main MEAO air base at Al Minhad in the U.A.E., as well as Air Load Teams in Afghanistan.

**814 C-17 Support.** On 10 Jul 09, a RAAF C-17 conducted the first of many C-17 missions into Afghanistan. C-17 aircraft from 36 Squadron provide routine strategic lift support to AS forces in the MEAO including Afghanistan.

### Maritime Operations

**815 RAN Major Fleet Unit (MFU).** The RAN contributes a main fleet combatant unit (MFU) to the maritime security operations in the Arabian Sea. The mission of the MFU is to undertake counter-piracy and maritime interdiction operations in the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden. The MFU is supported by a shore-based logistic unit.

**816 Counter-Piracy Operations.** In Dec 2008, Australia, along with 17 other countries, co-sponsored United Nations Security Council Resolution 1846 to extend counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia. Australia's contribution to these operations is achieved by broadening the range of tasks performed by the MFU and Maritime patrol aircraft that are currently deployed in the MEAO under Op SLIPPER. As part of its counter-piracy duties, RAN warships provide a deterrent presence and may escort merchant shipping in the maritime corridors of the Gulf of Aden, as well as track and report on piracy situations.

**817** The ADF also provides two naval officers in support of the Counter-Piracy Combined Task Force. This is a multi-national task force headquartered in the MEAO as part of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) Headquarters. Counter-piracy operations are conducted to detect and deter piracy in and around the Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and Red Sea. The task force is US-led, and was established to conduct maritime security operations.



*HMAS Melbourne closes on a suspected pirate vessel in the Arabian Sea.*

**818** One officer is involved in coalition planning for all maritime operations across the MEAO, including counter-piracy operations. The second officer is a RAN Legal Officer who assists in the development and implementation of maritime law policy.

### ENABLERS

**819 Heron Detachment.** The Heron UAV is a much larger aircraft than the Scan Eagle or Shadow 200 Tactical UAV and is capable of providing medium altitude reconnaissance, surveillance and mission support.



*RAAF Heron Landing at Kandahar Air Fietld (KAF).*

**820 Force Communications Element (FCE).** FCE is a joint unit responsible for the provision of national command and welfare communications and information systems to JTF633, supporting

National Command and Control across the MEAO. The FCE has elements at every significant location the ADF is deployed within the MEAO.

**821 Force Support Unit (FSU).** FSU is a joint unit providing logistics support, camp maintenance at Kandahar and Kabul, postal support throughout the MEAO and theatre induction training for ADF elements in the MEAO. Tasks of the FSU include the management and distribution of supplies and equipment necessary for the conduct of operations, the issue of combat equipment and provision for regional based training through the conduct of Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSO&I). As Australian forces drawdown to the levels required for Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT the FSU will also undergo changes to become the Force Support Element (FSE) with similar tasks as the FSU, although on a smaller scale.

## OTHER ADF ELEMENTS DEPLOYED TO AFGHANISTAN

**822 Embedded Staff.** ADF members are also embedded across a number of coalition headquarters throughout Afghanistan, providing critical, specialist staff effort in support of operations. These positions tend to be chosen in order for Australia to provide niche and subject-matter expertise to the ISAF mission at the theatre-level and, by so doing have a strategic impact on the campaign in Afghanistan.

**823 OP PALATE II.** Four ADF officers are attached to the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to maintain contact and liaison with all military forces throughout Afghanistan.



*ISAF Joint Command (IJC) at Kabul International Airport (KIA).*



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In addition to the above, the Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO) and the Defence Science & Technology Organisation's (DSTO) Conflict & Stabilisation Studies Team provide a number of more classified reporting on the nature of politics, society, insurgency and ISAF efforts in Uruzgan which are well worth a read.



# List of Acronyms

<b>AAF</b>	Afghan Air Force	<b>ANAP</b>	Afghan National Auxiliary Police (disbanded 2008)
<b>ABP</b>	Afghan Border Police	<b>ANBP</b>	Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme
<b>ACBAR</b>	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief	<b>ANCB</b>	Afghan NGO Coordination Bureau
<b>ACKU</b>	Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University	<b>ANCC</b>	Afghan National Re-Construction Co-ordination
<b>ACSFO</b>	Afghan Civil Society Forum Organisation	<b>ANCOP</b>	Afghan National Civil Order Police
<b>ACSOR</b>	Afghan Centre for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research	<b>ANDS</b>	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
<b>ACSP</b>	Afghanistan Country Stability Picture	<b>ANP</b>	Afghan National Police
<b>ADA</b>	Afghan Development Association	<b>ANSF</b>	Afghan National Security Forces
<b>ADF</b>	Afghanistan Development Forum	<b>APRP</b>	Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program
<b>Af-Pak</b>	Afghanistan-Pakistan	<b>AP3</b>	Afghan Public Protection Program
<b>AHDS</b>	Afghan Health and Development Services	<b>AQ</b>	Al Qa'eda
<b>AIHRC</b>	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	<b>ARDS</b>	Afghanistan Reconstruction Development Services
<b>AKDN</b>	Aga Khan Development Network	<b>AREDP</b>	Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program
<b>ALP</b>	Afghan Local Police	<b>AREU</b>	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
<b>ANA</b>	Afghan National Army		

<b>ARTF</b>	Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund	<b>IED</b>	Improvised Explosive Device
<b>ASP</b>	Afghan Stabilization Program	<b>IJC</b>	ISAF Joint Command
<b>ASOP</b>	Afghan Social Outreach Program	<b>IMU</b>	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
<b>AUP</b>	Afghan Uniformed Police	<b>ISAF</b>	International Security Assistance Force
<b>AusAID</b>	Australian Agency for International Development	<b>ISI</b>	Inter-Services Intelligence (Directorate)
<b>CDC</b>	Community Development Council	<b>JANIB</b>	Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board
<b>CLJ</b>	Constitutional Loya Jirga	<b>JCMB</b>	Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board
<b>CN</b>	Counter-Narcotics	<b>KAU</b>	Kandak Amniate Uruzgan
<b>CNPA</b>	Counter Narcotics Police Afghanistan	<b>KLE</b>	Key Leadership Engagement
<b>CNTF</b>	Counter Narcotics Trust Fund	<b>LDI</b>	Local Defence Initiative
<b>COIN</b>	Counterinsurgency	<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>COMISAF</b>	Commander of International Security Assistance Force	<b>MEAO</b>	Middle-East Area of Operations
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration	<b>MISFA</b>	Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development (UK)	<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>DIAG</b>	Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups	<b>Mol</b>	Ministry of Interior
<b>DSF</b>	District Stability Framework	<b>MRRD</b>	Ministry of Rehabilitation & Rural Development
<b>ECC</b>	Electoral Complaints Commission	<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>ELJ</b>	Emergency Loya Jirga	<b>NCPJ</b>	National Consultative Peace Jirga
<b>GIRoA</b>	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	<b>NDS</b>	National Directorate of Security
<b>HIG</b>	Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddin	<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>HQN</b>	Haqqani Network	<b>NHDR</b>	National Human Development Report
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross	<b>NSC</b>	National Security Council of Afghanistan
<b>IDLG</b>	Independent Directorate of Local Governance	<b>NSP</b>	National Solidarity Programme
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person	<b>NTM-A</b>	NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan
<b>IEC</b>	Independent Electoral Commission	<b>OEF</b>	Operation Enduring Freedom

<b>OHCHR</b>	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>OMLTs</b>	Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams
<b>PDP</b>	Provincial Development Plan
<b>POMLTs</b>	Police Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams
<b>PRSP</b>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
<b>PRT</b>	Provincial Reconstruction Team
<b>QST</b>	Quetta Shura Taliban
<b>RC</b>	Regional Command
<b>SCR</b>	Senior Civilian Representative (NATO)
<b>SET</b>	Special Electoral Tribunal
<b>SF</b>	Special Forces (Aus)
<b>SOF</b>	Special Operations Forces
<b>SSR</b>	Security Sector Reform
<b>TLO</b>	The Liason Office
<b>TTP</b>	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNAMA</b>	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNOCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USFOR-A</b>	United States Forces Afghanistan
<b>VSO</b>	Village Stability Operations
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Program

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